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A-League Round 21 Friday 22nd Feb - Sunday 24th Feb 2013

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**MELB HEART
SOUVENIR POSTER**
Page 14&15



**HAL ROUND 21
REWIND**
Page 5



**BFTP:
PICTORIAL BLAST**
Page 20



V-LEAGUE WRAP
Page 21



NYL REVIEW
Page 22



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FINALS NOW BECKON AFTER HITTING ROCK BOTTOM

SKY BLUE'S SECOND COMING!



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NEWCASTLE UNITED JETS



SEASON 2012/13



PHOTO: BEN NEVILLE

BACK ROW: 15. Craig Goodwin, 17. James Virgili, 12. Josh Brillante, 24. Mitchell Oxborrow, 18. Jacob Pepper, 21. Marko Jelic, 25. Mitch Cooper, 10. Bernardo Ribeiro.

MIDDLE ROW: 22. Adam Taggart, 2. Scott Neville, 6. Ben Kantarovski, 11. Connor Chapman, 30. Jack Duncan, 1. Ben Kennedy, 20. Mark Birighitti, 5. Dominik Ritter, 14. Taylor Regan, 13. Sam Galloway.

FRONT ROW: 4. Josh Mitchell, 19. Michael Bridges, 9. Emile Heskey, 16. Jobe Wheelhouse (c), Head Coach. Gary van Egmond, 8. Ruben Zadkovich, 23. Ryan Griffiths, 3. Tiago Calvano, 7. James Brown.

DEL PIERO COMMITS TO SECOND SEASON



Alessandro Del Piero and Sydney FC have agreed to trigger the second year of the World Cup winner's Sydney FC contract, continuing the most successful marquee player stint in the history of the Hyundai A-League.

"I am delighted to announce that Alessandro Del Piero will continue to be a Sydney FC player for the 2013/14 season," said Sydney FC Chairman Scott Barlow. "Alessandro's arrival at Sydney FC has been a wonderful success for Sydney FC and the A-League both domestically and internationally. "His performances on the field have been tremendous, highlighted by him becoming the leading goalscorer for Sydney FC in a single season, but off the field he has also delivered unprecedented interest and profile for Sydney FC across all levels of the club. "We look forward to working together with Alessandro to increase the profile of Sydney FC and football in Australia



as we strive for success on the pitch for the remainder of this season and next."

Del Piero expressed his joy at continuing with "Project Sydney".

"I am very happy to be staying at Sydney FC for another season," Del Piero said. "I chose Sydney FC at the beginning of this season because I wanted

to show my love of football in another country and I have enjoyed the challenge and my time at Sydney FC and in Australia.

"I have always said I want to continue that for next season but first we must work hard for success on the field for the rest of this season."

control of international and domestic broadcast and digital rights, information and communications technology, major event acquisition and stadium hiring arrangements.

He will have a formal co-ordination role over major projects that cover a range of new business opportunities for the benefit of community football and the professional tier. "I'm grateful to David Gallop for giving me this new opportunity and having confidence in my ability," said Kelly.

"My first year at FFA has given me a great insight to the football world. I'm tremendously excited by the growth I've seen this season and the opportunities ahead. As COO, I look forward to the challenge of delivering business improvements across a wide range of activities."

at giving FFA a greater focus on implementation of strategies and operational efficiency.

"John Kelly has vast experience in corporate finance and executive administration within the sports and entertainment industry," said Gallop.

"His significant role in the successful broadcast negotiations was acknowledged by all parties. In my first 100 days in the job John's sharp business and financial acumen have been demonstrated on a wide range of major projects beyond his finance portfolio.

"I'm delighted John has accepted this important role as COO and I look forward to working closely with him to make FFA a better organisation for all our stakeholders." As the COO, Kelly will retain responsibility for finance and assume



Football Federation Australia (FFA) has today announced the appointment of John Kelly as Chief Operating Officer.

Kelly has been promoted to the new role after joining FFA as the Chief Financial Officer in January 2012. Previously, he spent a decade in senior executive roles with Ten Network Holdings.

During FFA's broadcast negotiations last year with FOX SPORTS, SBS and Foxtel, Kelly played a leading role in securing arrangements that will deliver \$160 million of economic value of the next four years.

FFA CEO David Gallop said the creation of the COO role and the appointment of John Kelly were the first steps in a restructure aimed

FFA appoints new CEO



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Matildas squad for AIS Camp



Newly appointed Westfield Matildas Head Coach Hesterine de Reus has named her first Westfield Matildas squad for a 4-day training camp at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra which will commence later this week (21-24 February 2013).

Having arrived in Australia in early January, de Reus watched all matches of the Westfield W-League 2013 Final Series and has been meeting with various stakeholders to plan the Westfield Matildas upcoming program.

de Reus is looking forward to the first opportunity to work with the Westfield Matildas on the training field since the start of her tenure as Head Coach.

"It is good to have the bulk of players available and in the country to

come into our first camp together", said de Reus

"The purpose of this training camp is to meet with the players, set-up the highlights of how we are going to work together and also discuss our short-term and long-term aims. "Most importantly we can start on the field and work on our playing style," concluded de Reus.

Of the 31 players named, nine (9) have been included on reduced training loads due to a variety of reasons with Heather Garriock in particular joining the Westfield Matildas squad for the first time since appearing at the Olympic Games qualifiers in September 2011 and giving birth to her first child last year. Dual-international Ellyse Perry will also join the Westfield Matildas squad after her outstanding performance last weekend as part of the

World Cup winning Southern Stars Australian Women's Cricket team.

MATILDAS TRAINING SQUAD

Teigen ALLEN, Laura ALLEWAY, Mackenzie ARNOLD (gk), Danielle BROGAN*, Ashley BROWN*, Ellie BRUSH, Kim CARROLL*, Stephanie CATLEY, Amy CHAPMAN, Brianna DAVEY*, Lisa DE VANNA, Caitlin FOORD, Heather GARRIOCK*, Emily GIELNIK, Kathryn GILL*, Katrina GORRY, Michelle HEYMAN, Elise KELLOND-KNIGHT, Alanna KENNEDY, Samantha KERR, Shamiran KHAMIS (gk), Leena KHAMIS*, Aivi LUIK*, Collette McCALLUM, Ellyse PERRY*, Teresa POLIAS, Clare POLKINGHORNE, Renee ROLLASON, Kyah SIMON, Servet UZUNLAR, Emily VAN EGMOND.

Victory welcomes new legislation aimed at troublemakers



Melbourne Victory Football Club welcomes the proposed changes to state legislation announced today, increasing the penalties for troublemakers at major sporting events.

Under the new legislation set to be introduced by the Victorian Government, anyone who lights flares will be handed a fine of more than \$1,000, while those who invade the pitch or cause trouble will be banned from events or venues for up to five years.

Managing Director, Richard Wilson, said the club welcomed the tough new legislation.

"The changes to crowd management legislation under the Major Sporting Events Act is something our club has been working tirelessly behind the scenes to achieve with Victoria Police for over two years," Mr Wilson said.

"We're of the belief that these tough new penalties will be instrumental in heavily reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour occasionally seen at football games.

"We are committed to continue to work with Victoria Police, FFA, all venues and security staff to eradicate the behaviour of the absolute minority who come to football matches with the intent to behave in an anti-social manner."

"We have seen an enormous increase in our crowds this season and we continue to get extremely positive feedback about the events and the wonderful atmosphere created and we don't want to have this compromised by a handful of people doing the wrong thing." "Today's legislation changes will certainly assist all involved in removing the small element of troublemakers and dissuade people from considering getting involved in this behaviour."

SYDNEY FC SIGNS SOCCEROO CAPTAIN LUCAS NEILL



Sydney FC has signed Socceroo captain Lucas Neill until the end of the 2012/13 Hyundai A-League season.

Neill joins Sydney FC after a hugely decorated career for club and country, culminating in representing Australia at two World Cups (2006 and 2010).

"We're thrilled Lucas has joined Sydney FC," said coach Frank Farina. "He is the current Socceroo captain and one of Australia's most decorated players but more importantly he is a tremendous defender and he will make a valuable contribution in the run in to the semi final series."

Neill made the decision to join

Sydney FC last Saturday morning.

"I'm a Sydney boy and I'm excited to be coming back to Australia to play club football in front of friends and family with Sydney FC," Neill said. "I worked with Frank for many years in the Socceroos and I look back on those times with good memories, and it's great to have the chance to enjoy further success together at Sydney FC. Hopefully the team can get a win today and I look forward to meeting my new teammates tomorrow."

Neill began training with Sydney FC during the week and will be available for selection for the round 22 match against Melbourne Heart at AAMI Park on Sunday.



SHORT PASSES

BRATTAN SIGNS ON FOR FURTHER TWO YEARS



Brisbane Roar has secured the services of emerging midfielder Luke Brattan for a further two seasons.

In a positive step forward for Brisbane, the 22-year-old this week committed himself to the club until the conclusion of the Hyundai A-League 2014/15 season.

Under the guidance of Head Coach Mike Mulvey, Brattan has begun to develop into a vital cog in the Brisbane Roar midfield with his defensive work rate and forward passing coming to the fore in recent weeks.

Brattan said he was delighted to re-sign with his home town club, citing the recent signing of Mulvey to the full-time Head Coach role as a key influence on his decision.

SFC EXTENDS

CHIANESE CONTRACT



Sydney FC has extended the contract of striker Joel Chianese for a further season, keeping the speedster at the Sky Blues

until the end of the 2013/14 Hyundai A-League season.

South Melbourne News



South Melbourne FC confirms that 2012 captain Steven O'Dor has retired effective immediately due to increasing professional work commitments.

Steve played for South in the old National Youth League prior to 2004. The young centre-back was signed by John Anastasiadis as part of South's first squad in the Victorian Premier League when the Club returned to state football in 2005. His debut match was in the opening round against Heidelberg United on Sunday 30 January 2005 in front of a crowd of nearly 12,000 at Lakeside Stadium.

The club also announced during the week the departures of Steve Burton, Glen Trifiro and Jason Saldaris for the 2013 Victorian Premier League season.

Both Burton and Saldaris return to Perth, whilst Trifiro has returned back to his native New South Wales, where he will be playing for Sydney United 58 in the 2013 New South Wales Premier League.

The club would like to thank the trio for their efforts throughout 2012 and wish them all the best for the year ahead.

In the meantime 26 year old Dutch striker Renco Van Eeken has signed for the 2013 Victorian Premier League season.

Van Eeken or as he's already been affectionately named around the club 'RVE', is a classy left footer who has come to the club directly from the Netherlands, playing for Hardenberg in the 2011-12 season.

Melbourne Knights News



Next Sunday 3rd March the Melbourne Knights will be playing the Friendship Cup against Sydney United at Knights Stadium. On the same day the official opening of

a new gym (situated under the grandstand), as well as the announcement of major sponsors and new signings. The match will be kicking off at 4pm, with the gym opening along with major sponsor and new signing announcements at 2pm.

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SCOREBOARD

TABLE	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Central Coast Mariners	21	12	6	3	37	16	21	42
2 West Sydney Wanderers	21	13	2	6	30	18	12	41
3 Melbourne Victory	21	11	3	7	34	32	2	36
4 Adelaide United	21	11	2	8	32	30	2	35
5 Sydney FC	21	8	3	10	34	41	-7	27
6 Newcastle Jets	21	7	5	9	26	33	-7	26
7 Brisbane Roar	21	7	3	11	26	26	0	24
8 Melbourne Heart	21	7	3	11	26	29	-3	24
9 Perth Glory	21	6	4	11	20	23	-3	22
10 Wellington Phoenix	21	5	5	11	22	39	-17	20

THIS WEEK	ROUND 22	FIXTURE	VENUE	LOCAL	AEDT
	Fri Feb 22	Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar	Hunter Stadium	7:30pm	7:30pm
	Sat Feb 23	W Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory	Parramatta Stadium	5:30pm	5:30pm
	Sat Feb 23	Central Coast Mariners v Melbourne Victory	Bluetongue Stadium	7:45pm	7:45pm
	Sun Feb 24	Wellington Phoenix v Adelaide United	Westpac Stadium	4:30pm	2:30pm
	Sun Feb 24	Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC	AAMI Park	5:00pm	5:00pm

NEXT WEEK	ROUND 23	FIXTURE	VENUE	LOCAL	AEDT
	Sat Mar 02	Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00pm	5:30pm
	Sat Mar 02	CC Mariners v W Sydney Wanderers	Bluetongue Stadium	7:45pm	7:45pm
	Sat Mar 02	Perth Glory v Sydney FC	TBA	6:45pm	9:45pm
	Sun Mar 03	Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Heart	Forsyth Stdm, Dunedin	4:30pm	2:30pm
	Sun Mar 03	Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets	AAMI Park	5:00pm	5:00pm

ROUND 21 RESULTS

Newcastle Jets 2 (Heskey 10, Griffiths 80)
Melbourne Heart 0
 Crowd: 11,396 at Hunter Stadium

Perth Glory 2 (Dodd 27, Smeltz 64)
Central Coast Mariners 1 (Ibini 13)
 Crowd: 5909 @ nib Stadium

Sydney FC 2 (Antonis 49, Powell 66)
Adelaide United 1 (Juric 78)
 Crowd: 15,602 @Allianz Stadium

Brisbane Roar 2 (Lustica 32, Berisha 49)
Wellington Phoenix 0
 Crowd: 9,282 @Suncorp Stadium

Melbourne Victory 1 (Pain 75)
Western Sydney Wanderers 2 (La Rocca 11, Ono 72)
 Crowd: 21,638 @ AAMI Park

TOP GOAL SCORERS

- 15 - Daniel McBREEN (Mariners)
- 12 - Marco ROJAS (Victory)
- Besart BERISHA (Roar)
- 11 - Jeremy BROCKIE (Phoenix)
- Alessandro DEL PIERO (SFC)
- 9 - Emile HESKEY (Jets)
- Ryan GRIFFITHS (Jets)
- 8 - Mark BRIDGE (Wanderers)
- Dario VIDOSIC (Adelaide)
- 7 - Archie THOMPSON (Victory)



Heaven's above: With 6 rounds left to play, last year's Golden Boot winner Brisbane Roar's Besart Berisha, has by no means surrender his title by any stretch of the imagination just yet.

A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE WEEK Round 21

Compiled by
Steven Talevski



GK: Michael Theo – One of two goalkeepers to keep a clean sheet this weekend, Theo did his job to overturn some recent shaky form and help Brisbane pick up an all-important three points.

RB: Jerome Polenz – Polenz had a man of the match performance in the Wanderers first trip to Melbourne which ended up with the side picking up three points.

CB: Trent Sainsbury – His side may have gone down 2-1 but Sainsbury had a solid game in defence and was the pick of his team's performance on the weekend.

CB: Michael Thwaite – With his side struggling in the league, Thwaite used all his experience to help the newly managed Perth Glory pick up a win against the top of the table Mariners.

LB: Shane Steffanutto – Assisted in the Roar's opener and was a constant attacking threat down the left wing for his side.

CDM: Ruban Zadkovich – Held his midfield well as they picked up a two nil victory over the Heart.

RM: Zenon Caravella – Since signing from Adelaide United, Caravella has been impressive in the Jets midfield and had a terrific game against the Heart this weekend.

LM: Nick Ward – Given a start this week by new manager Alistair Edwards, Ward pulled in a great shift which included a superb cross for Travis Dodd's equaliser.

CAM: Alessandro Del Piero – He may not have been on the score sheet this week, but Del Piero's attacking threat was too much for Adelaide to handle as the sky blues picked up a victory at home.

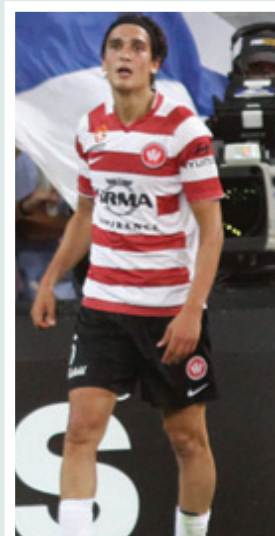
RS: Corey Gameiro – The youngster had a terrific debut in the A-League, being a big attacking threat for the Phoenix and only lacked a goal in his performance.

LS: Ryan Griffiths – Another very efficient game by the attacker as he set up Emile Heskey for the games opener before scoring one himself in the second half.

Coach: Tony Popovic – Western Sydney became only the second side this season to defeat the Victory at home after a well-structured performance. Popovic handed Italian Iacopo La Rocca a surprise start, and the midfielder didn't disappoint scoring the games opener as the Wanderers move one point from the top of the table.

Star Man

Jerome Polenz
Wanderers



It's not often that a defender gets rewarded with the star man award, but Polenz was a clear standout in the rounds biggest game. His defensive efforts, especially denying Victory youngster Andrew Nabbout a goal, helped the Wanderers to an impressive 2-1 victory at AAMI Park.

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Newcastle Jets



2

Melbourne Heart



0

Match Details

Newcastle Jets 2
(Heskey 10', Griffiths 81')
Melbourne Heart 0
Venue: Hunter Stadium
Crowd: 11,396
Referee: Chris Beath
Assistants: Ashley Beecham, Leigh Pigram
Fourth official: Adam Gehrig

Newcastle Jets: 3. Zenon Caravella (15. Craig Goodwin 86'), 5. Dominik Ritter, 8. Ruben Zadkovich (c), 9. Emile Heskey (17. James Virgili 75'), 12. Joshua Brillante, 13. Samuel Gallaway, 14. Taylor Regan, 19. Michael Bridges (25. Mitch Cooper 67'), 20. Mark Birighitti (gk), 22. Adam Taggart, 23. Ryan Griffiths
Substitutes not used: 1. Ben Kennedy (gk)
Yellow cards: Gallaway 17', Caravella 28',
Red cards: nil

Melbourne Heart: 4. Simon Colosimo, 6. Patrick Gerhardt, 8. Matt Thompson (c), 11. Richard Garcia, 13. Jonathan Germano (16. Marcel Meeuwis 62'), 15. David Williams (14. Golgol Mebrahtu 79'), 20. Andrew Redmayne (gk), 21. Jamie Coyne, 22. Nicholas Kalmar (5. Fred 57'), 25. Jeremy Walker, 36. Eli Babalj
Substitutes not used: 1. Clint Bolton (gk)
Yellow cards: Germano 20', Babalj 25', Garcia 56', Gerhardt 85'
Red cards: nil

Heskey and Griffiths Launch Jets To Win

By Shaun Dyas

The Newcastle Jets have enhanced their finals prospects with a deserved 2-0 victory over a travel shy Melbourne Heart in front of 11,396 fans at Hunter Stadium.

Emile Heskey scored in the 10th minute and Ryan Griffiths scored on 81 minutes, taking their season tallies to nine goals each.

It also meant that the Jets leapfrogged the Heart in the race to secure one of the two remaining berths in the A-League finals series. Gary Van Egmond was very pleased with the performance of his new look side.

"Overall we had the mainstay of the game in regards to controlling it," he said.

"We just wanted to go out and show the members and the supporters the kind of football we can play." "It just seems like we had goals in us tonight."

John Aloisi felt that the match hinged on a period midway through the first half.

"During that 25-30 minute spell where we were on top when Eli hit the post we were able to switch the ball and hit our wingers quite easily," he said.

He is still worried however with his team's away record.

"It is a bit concerning that we are not winning away from home because I think we are more than good enough to win more."

Earlier, Newcastle started positively, circulating the ball and keeping possession well. They deservedly took the lead in the 10th minute. Taylor Regan played a ball through to Adam Taggart who spun away from the defence and played the ball to Ryan Griffiths. He split the centre halves with an incisive through ball and Emile Heskey did the rest, smashing his shot on goal and watching it squirm under Heart Keeper Andrew Redmayne from 15 yards.

Melbourne Heart was unlucky not to equalise in the 25th minute. Richard Garcia escaped down the right flank from a beautiful switch by Nick Kalmar. He whipped in a per-

fect cross for target man Eli Babalj who's first time shot smashed the base of Mark Birighitti's right hand upright.

Newcastle created another opportunity on 40 minutes. Joshua Brillante refused to give up on a ball down the Heart's left and managed to dispossess Jamie Coyne. He squared the ball for Adam Taggart who drilled his shot low and hard but it was well saved by Redmayne.

Eli Babalj continually looked dangerous and was again unlucky not to equalise for the visitors in first half stoppage time. Dominik Ritter inexplicably turned over the ball and the Heart sprung into life. The move ended with Babalj twisting Taylor Regan inside out before firing an effort at Birighitti's near post. The jets custodian managed to parry the ball around the post and away to safety.

Newcastle continued to build encouragingly in the second half and Captain Ruben Zadkovich went close with a vicious drive from the edge of the box. The ball was squared to him by Griffiths and his shot whizzed by Redmayne's left post.

Heart went close to restoring parity in the 63rd minute. The ball was released wide to David Williams who cut inside Brillante and hammered a goal bound strike at Birighitti's net. Taylor Regan had other ideas and valiantly blocked the shot over the crossbar.

The Jets went straight up the other end and almost extended their lead. Taggart took things into his own hands, dribbling in from his station on the left edge and rifling a shot at Redmayne's near post. He beat the keeper but unfortunately for the home fans his strike hit the same upright Babalj's effort hit in the first half.

The Jets put the game to bed with some gorgeous football in the 81st minute. Young Mitch Cooper had come off the bench and he played a lovely ball with the outside of his right foot to Taggart. He dinked the ball in behind the Heart defence and Griffiths did the rest by lobbing the ball over the helpless Redmayne.

Newcastle now looks forward to the visit of Brisbane Roar next week and the Heart face Sydney FC as the intense race for positions in the top 6 continues to heat up.



Man of the Match
Adam Taggart
(Newcastle Jets)

Was a constant menace with his driving runs and pace and also laid on a beautiful assist for Griffiths' match sealing strike.

Emile Heskey carries the finals hopes of the Jets and delivers once again in front of goals. Photo: PETER NEVILLE



Ryan Griffiths (Jets) is hot on the heels of Heart playmaker Fred. Photo: BEN NEVILLE



Ryan Griffiths puts the icing on the cake for the Jets to make it 2-0 and secure the all-important three points. Photo: BEN NEVILLE

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FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME



Sydney FC

2



Adelaide United

1



Match Details

Sydney FC 2 (Terry Antonis 49', Blake Powell 67')
Adelaide United 1 (Tomi Juric 78')
 Allianz Stadium
 Crowd: 15,602
 Referee: Strebrel Delovski

Sydney FC: 20. Vedran Janjetovic (Gk), 2. Sebastian Ryall, 3. Fabio, 8. Adam Griffiths, 10. Alessandro Del Piero, 12. Blake Powell (16. Joel Chianese 76'), 13. Tiago Calvano, 15. Terry McFlynn, 17. Terry Antonis, 23. Rhyann Grant, 26. Peter Triantis (9. Paul Reid 46').

Subs Not Used: 1. Ivan Necevski (Gk), 18. Trent McClenahan
 Yellow Cards: Terry McFlynn 68'

Adelaide United: 1. Eugene Galekovic (Gk), 2. Osama Malik, 3. Nigel Boogaard, 4. Jonathan McKain (14. Cameron Watson 62'), 5. Iain Fyfe, 8. Marcelo Carrusca, 10. Dario Vidosic, 12. Antony Golec, 16. Daniel Bowles (18. Fabian Barbiero 67'), 17. Iain Ramsey (25. Tomi Juric 76'), 21. Jeronimo Neumann.

Sub Not Used: 20. Paul Izzo (Gk)
 Yellow Cards: Anthony Golec 59', Iain Fyfe 83', Michael Carrusca 84'

SFC climbs up to 5th after dispatching Reds

By David Mason

A blistering two goal burst at the start of the second half from Sydney FC Young Guns Terry Antonis and Blake Powell has given Sky Blues a 2-1 win over Adelaide tonight at Allianz Stadium.

In front of 15,602 passionate supporters, Antonis' first career goal and Powell's third of the season shot Sydney into fifth position on the ladder, in the process securing a club record fifth consecutive home win.

After dominating the match, the home side were made to work hard for the points in the last ten minutes after a late riposte from Tomi Juric allowed Adelaide United a sniff of an unlikely draw.

Sydney won the crucial midfield battle through Antonis, Terry McFlynn, Rhyann Grant and Alessandro Del Piero but credit must also go to Tiago Calvano, who was rock solid in defence.

Coach Frank Farina was forced to make two changes from last week's victorious side against the Roar. Terry Antonis and Terry McFlynn were handed starts in place of the suspended Brett Emerton and Ali Abbas.

The match started with both teams happy to hold possession although it was Sydney FC that tried to assert some dominance with Adelaide content to sit and hit on the counter attack.

After many fruitful raids last week, it was no surprise to see the Sky Blues left flank create the first chance of the match, with Fabio the architect. The Brazilian rode a rough challenge from Osama Malik before sliding in a low cross to the near cross where Powell saw his first time shot blocked.

After 20 minutes Del Piero received a free kick right on the edge of the box. Whilst he saw the effort blocked, it proved the catalyst to for a spell of dominance for the home side, with long range shots the order of the day.

Antonis and McFlynn both tried



Sydney FC are firing all cylinders once again, and have plenty of momentum behind them, as they surge towards finals football. Photo: ALI ERHAN

their luck, with the former coming closest with a brilliant volley just going the wrong side of the post.

On 27 minutes Sydney should have hit the front through Grant. Playing wide left Grant cut inside with a surging run only to see his initial effort blocked. Reacting well, he picked up the crumbs and with the goal gaping placed his shot too close to Adelaide keeper Eugene Galekovic.

Sydney would have been disappointed to be level at half time after being the better side, but nearly fell behind in the dying seconds of the half. Carrusca made a good run down the left flank and his deep cross looked set to be met by Dario Vidosic, only for Grant to pop up with an outstanding defensive header.

Sydney looked to get an advan-

tage right from the get go in the second half as they came out of the blocks on fire.

Del Piero saw an excellent 30m free kick dip and swerve past Galekovic, only to see the ball hit the base of the left upright and ricochet out off the Adelaide custodian.

With the home fans baying for blood Antonis saluted, albeit with the help of a deflection. Half time substitute Paul Reid found the midfielder, who cut infield and powered a left foot shot into Iain Fyfe leaving the ball to nestle in the bottom right corner past a stranded Galekovic.

Looking for a quick reply Dario Vidosic tried to emulate the Del Piero set piece from minutes before but saw his effort easily saved by Vedran Janjetovic.

Realising the danger the away

side possessed, the Sky Blues pushed hard for a second goal peppering Galekovic at will.

Ryall was the first to try his luck going on a surging run only to hit an effort straight at the keeper with Reid seeing a shot fly wide barely minutes later.

On sixty minutes Galekovic must have been thinking it was Groundhog Day as Del Piero lined up another free kick from the exact spot he tried his luck 15 minutes earlier. This time the Italian looked on in vein as his attempt rolled just wide of the right hand post.

Whilst Del Piero couldn't score himself he provided the vital corner that saw Sydney score the vital second goal. The Italians' out swinging corner from the right hand side was met by Adam Griffiths at the near post whose flick on was bundled home by Powell

much to the delight of The Cove.

Not content with the assist, Del Piero again attempted some set piece magic, only to see Galekovic up to the challenge with a strong save.

From the ensuing goal kick Adelaide found a lifeline into the match. Debutant Juric was found by Galekovic and sprinted clear of the Sydney defence finishing powerfully past Janjetovic.

Despite some late nerves Sydney held on for the deserved three points, maintaining the late challenge for a top four position.

Sydney FC now has back to back away matches against Melbourne Heart (February 24) and Perth Glory (March 2) before returning to Allianz Stadium on March 9 to face the Central Coast Mariners.

	Match Stats	
2	Saves	4
7	Attempts on target	3
10	Attempts off target	4
57%	Possession	43%
5	Corners	2
5	Offsides	1
12	Fouls committed	19



Young gun Terry Antonis scored his first goal in Sydney FC colours.
 Photo: ALI ERHAN



The Sky Blues celebrate after defeating Adelaide United at home for the first time since 2009. Photo: ALI ERHAN



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Glory dent Mariner's Plate hopes after coaching change

By Ben O'Neill

Perth Glory



2

CC Mariners



1

Match Details

Perth Glory 2
(Dodd 27', Smeltz 64')
Central Coast Mariners 1
(Ibini 13')
Nib Stadium, Perth
Referee: Jarrod Gillett
Crowd: 5,909

Perth Glory: 1. Daniel Vukovic (Gk), 5. Steve Pantelidis, 6. Nick Ward, 8. Dean Heffernan, 9. Shane Smeltz, 10. Liam Miller, 13. Travis Dodd (C), 14. Steven McGarry, 17. Chris Harold (12. Ryo Nagai 59'), 19. Joshua Risdon, 23. Michael Thwaite
Substitutes Not Used: 2. Jack Clisby, 15. Brandon O'Neill, 30. Lewis Italiano (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Smeltz
Red Cards: Nil

Central Coast Mariners: 1. Mathew Ryan (Gk), 2. Daniel McBreen, 3. Joshua Rose, 4. Pedj Bojic, 6. Patrick Zwaanswijk, 7. John Hutchinson (C), 9. Bernie Ibini (29. Nick Fitzgerald 68'), 14. Michael McGlinchey, 16. Trent Sainsbury, 18. Nick Montgomery (5. Zac Anderson 71'), 21. Mile Sterjovski (19. Mitchell Duke 55')
Substitutes Not Used: 20. Justin Pasfield (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Nil
Red Cards: Nil

CENTRAL Coast Mariners' unbeaten run in 2013 came to an end on Saturday evening with Graham Arnold's side falling 2-1 to Perth Glory in Western Australia.

Bernie Ibini gave the yellow and navy an early lead however strikes to Travis Dodd and Shane Smeltz either side of half time earned the purple-whites their first win of the year.

Graham Arnold's team remain atop the Hyundai A-League ladder, however the club's lead has now been trimmed to just one point with Western Sydney Wanderers having beaten Melbourne Victory earlier in the day.

The Mariners got off to the best possible start at nib Stadium with Ibini netting his sixth goal of the campaign only 13 minutes in. Daniel McBreen worked determinedly to win possession in the Mariners' attacking third, before Michael McGlinchey fed the onrushing Ibini. The young attacker made no mistake in finding the back of the net, sliding a clinical shot past Vukovic to give Arnold's team the lead.

But Glory, who this week had Alistair Edwards replace Ian Ferguson as their Head Coach, restored parity to the contest 27 minutes. Dodd's run was picked out well by midfielder Nick Ward. Controlling Ward's lofted pass at the first attempt, the former Panionios player then fired his shot beyond Central Coast gloveman Mathew Ryan.

There was a good tempo to the game and Patrick Zwaanswijk's diagonal switches of play were causing issues for the Glory defence in the first half. Twice in the space of three minutes Bojic marauded down the right having been spotted by the elegant



Perth Glory players celebrate Shane Smeltz's (centre) winner. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

Dutch defender, however the end product didn't quite match the lead-up play as Central Coast failed to trouble the Glory goal.

The Mariners' best chance regain the lead in the match came in the 38th minute. Joshua Rose and Mile Sterjovski combined well down the left, with the latter sliding a pass to McBreen in space. The A-League's leading goal-getter struck his shot at the first attempt, however miscued his effort, sending the ball well over Vukovic's bar.

Smeltz hasn't had his best season in Australia's top flight however the New Zealand international is always a handful and he proved why he is so highly rated 20 minutes after the interval. Joshua Risdon, who only a minute early cannoned a long range shot off the crossbar, floated in an inch-perfect cross which Smeltz met with purpose. Ryan got a hand to Smeltz's header, but couldn't manage to keep the former Gold Coast United man's effort out.

Mariners boss Arnold changed some of his personnel and his tactics with the clock winding down however a determined Glory team restricted Central Coast to only a series of half-chances to level proceedings after Smeltz's 64th minute goal.

Ultimately, it wasn't to be Central Coast's day as Arnold's men fell to their third defeat of the 2012/13 Hyundai A-League season.

Positively, Central Coast Mariners return to Gosford's Blu-

etongue Stadium next Saturday night for Hyundai A-League round 22. The challenge of Melbourne Victory at the Mariners' idyllic bayside arena awaits, and also marks the start of an important seven days for the club. Home clashes against Suwon Bluewings (Wednesday 27 February) and Western Sydney Wanderers (Saturday 2 March) feature within the space of a week in Gosford.

Match Stats		
3	Saves	2
6	Attempts on target	4
7	Attempts off target	6
54%	Possession	46%
5	Corners	3
3	Offsides	1
10	Fouls committed	15



Mariners keeper Matthew Ryan can't keep out Shane Smeltz's well directed header. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



Pedj Bojic (Mariners) and Chris Harold (Glory) get themselves in a tangle. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

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Brisbane Roar



2

Wellington Phoenix



0

Match Details

Brisbane Roar 2
(Steven Lustica 33', Besart Berisha 49')

Wellington Phoenix 0
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane
Referee: Alan Milliner
Crowd: 9,282

Brisbane Roar: 1. Michael Theo (Gk), 3. Shane Stefanutto, 7. Besart Berisha (29. Kwame Yeboah 90'), 8. Massimo Muroccca (9. Stef Nijland 73'), 11. Ben Halloran, 13. Jade North (26. Corey Brown 78'), 14. Steven Lustica, 15. James Donachie, 18. Luke Brattan, 19. Jack Hingert, 22. Thomas Broich (C)

Substitutes Not Used: 20. Matt Acton (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Nil
Red Cards: Nil

Wellington Phoenix: 2. Emmanuel Muscat, 3. Tony Lochhead, 4. Isaka Cernak (21. Daniel Sanchez 27'), 8. Paul Ifill (10. Stein Huysegems 63'), 12. Tyler Boyd, 16. Louis Fenton, 17. Vince Lia, 18. Ben Sigmund, 20. Glen Moss (Gk), 22. Andrew Durante (C), 23. Corey Gameiro

Substitutes Not Used: 1. Mark Paston (Gk), 7. Leo Bertos
Yellow Cards: Corey Gameiro 38', Ben Sigmund 74', Daniel Sanchez 83'
Red Cards: Nil

Roar caps off long week with vital win

By Jarrod Ellis

A cloudy and rainy sky reflected the gloomy atmosphere around Suncorp Stadium when Brisbane welcomed Wellington Phoenix to town.

After consecutive losses to Sydney and Buriram United Brisbane were desperately in need of a lift and hosting a Wellington team occupying the bottom of the A-League ladder was perhaps the tonic that the Roar needed.

Goals from Steve Lustica and Besart Berisha and some lucky escapes were enough for Brisbane to secure a 2-0 win and remain within touching distance of the top-six.

Wellington could consider themselves unlucky not to at least get on the scoresheet, loan-signing Corey Gameiro had a goal disallowed whilst Stein Huysegems looked odds-on to score in the second half only to have the ball snatched away at the last moment by Jade North.

Playing their third match in eight days it came as no surprise that Brisbane started slowly out of the blocks, the visitors from across the ditch had the run of early proceedings.

It appeared that the Phoenix had taken advantage of their early superiority in the opening minutes when Gameiro headed home past Michael Theo after an initial save. Match referee Alan Milliner was prepared to award the goal but on the advice of an assistant ruled it out due to a foul on North by Gameiro.

Neither side were creating chances in the attacking third with opportunities in front of goal few and far between until just after the half-hour mark when Brisbane took the lead through Steven Lustica

The goal arrived through a combination that has proven so effective the past three years. Thomas Broich and Shane Stefanutto combined down the left wing, allowing for Stefanutto to pick out and unmarked Lustica on the penalty spot who then slotted his left-foot strike past Glen Moss in the Phoenix goal.

The goal had arguably arrived



Besart Berisha doubles the Roar's lead much to the annoyance of Phoenix's Glen Moss. Photo: KEITH EIGELAND

against the run of play and it appeared to sting Wellington into a flurry of action. Louis Fenton tested Theo twice in a matter of minutes and there were some worrisome moments at corners for the home team.

Wellington continued on from their when they returned for the second half but only four minutes after the restart they conceded again due to a lack of concentration.

Danny Sanchez, brought on for the injured Isaka Cernak, was the culprit, playing a pass deep in his own half that was easily latched onto by Luke Brattan. From there the Roar midfielder didn't waste the opportu-

nity presented him, striding forward before setting up Besart Berisha to extend Brisbane's lead.

Broich almost had the Suncorp Stadium crowd on their feet again in the 63rd minute, turning inside a throw in from Stefanutto and unleashing a dipping volley that whistled just high of the crossbar.

Wellington had several chances to reduce the deficit in the last half hour but such is the lack of confidence in the side at the moment they all went begging and Brisbane was able to hold on for a much needed 2-0 win.

Aside from the match itself there was a moment of added drama with a

small faction of the Brisbane support known as the River City Crew having a "Mulvey Out" banner confiscated by security.

After the match Mulvey appeared unfazed by the show of discontent and praised the team after a tough week.

"It was a very important result and it's been on the end of a lot of travel," Mulvey said.

"I think it's fair to say we were on the move for 18 hours there and 18 hours back so it's takes a lot out of you but I can't speak highly enough of the effort the boys put in today because it was very tough.

"We had bodies that were sore but

they toughed it out and I was very pleased with their effort."

Ricki Herbert lamented Wellington's missed chances, saying he believed his team should have got something out of the game.

"The second goal was a real killer. Turning the ball over in that area of the pitch shouldn't happen, but the same thing happened last time we came here.

"I felt the endeavour we showed was good enough to get a result."

Man of the Match
Steven Lustica
(Brisbane Roar)

	Match Stats	
5	Saves	3
5	Attempts on target	6
6	Attempts off target	10
57%	Possession	43%
3	Corners	7
0	Offsides	1
7	Fouls committed	19



Stein Huysegems (Phoenix) shows poise in controlling the ball under pressure from Corey Brown (Roar). Photo: KEITH EIGELAND



Tony Lochhead (Phoenix), Louis Fenton (Phoenix) and Ben Halloran (Roar) leap for the header. Photo: KEITH EIGELAND



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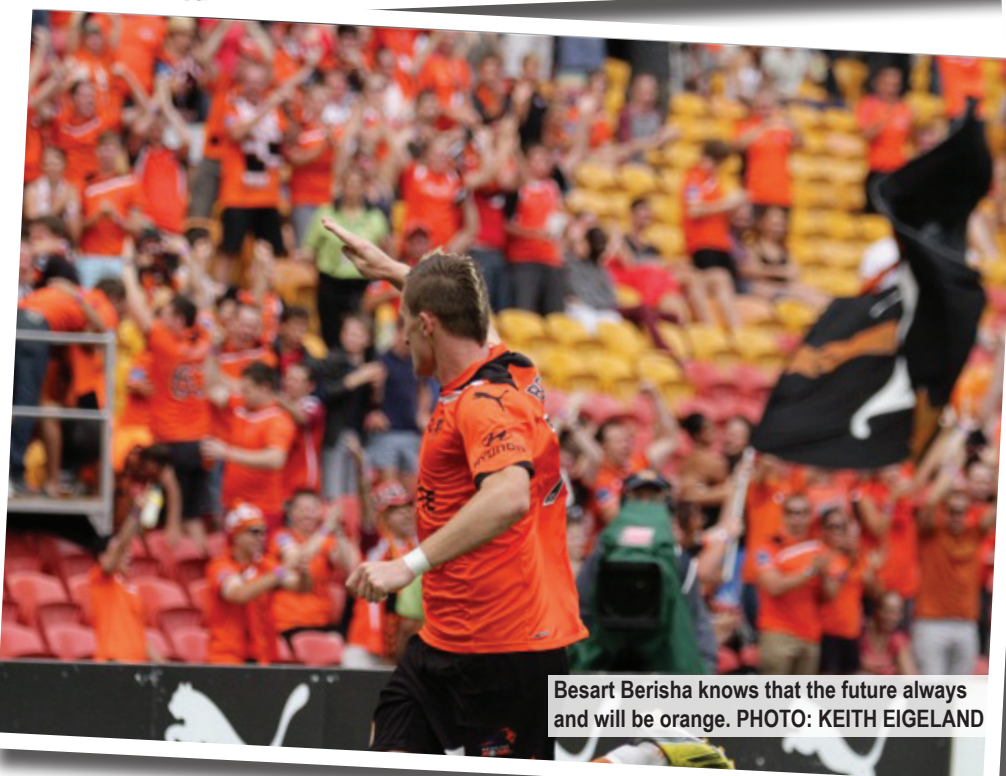
Les Shorrock's
Action Packed
Picture Page



Melbourne Victory fans are packed to the rafters at AAMI Park to come and see their heroes play.. Photo: ANITA MILAS



A larger than life Archie Thompson upstages the real deal at the President's Luncheon. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Besart Berisha knows that the future always and will be orange. PHOTO: KEITH EIGELAND



Tomi Juric wastes no time getting on the mark for Adelaide United . Photo: ALI ERHAN



Looks like the youth policy at SFC is finally working.... PHOTO: ALI ERHAN



Victory's Marcos Flores gets ready to ping a cross in against a well organised Wanderers defence. Photo: ANITA MILAS



Newcastle Jets fans are a proud and loyal bunch. Photo: PETER NEVILLE



Zad's Lads show their appreciation to cult hero Ruben Zadkovich. Photo: PETER NEVILLE



Jets Line Up

1. Ben Kennedy (gk)
3. Zenon Caravella
5. Dominik Ritter
7. James Brown
8. Ruben Zadkovich (c)
9. Emile Heskey
12. Josh Brillante
13. Sam Gallaway
14. Taylor Regan
15. Craig Goodwin
17. James Virgili
19. Michael Bridges
20. Ma+rk Birighitti (gk)
22. Adam Taggart
23. Ryan Griffiths
25. Mitch Cooper
26. Andrew Hoole (Two to be omitted)

Ins: James Brown, Andrew Hoole (both promoted)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: Connor Chapman (ankle), Ben Kantarovski (knee/season)

Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar

By Shaun Dyas

The Newcastle Jets face Brisbane Roar on Friday night in another A-League match of utmost importance. After defeating Melbourne Heart last Friday night the Jets have leapt back into the top six at the expense of the Heart.

Their opponents Brisbane find themselves on the cusp of the six and would move a point clear of the Jets if they could escape Hunter Stadium with the three points on Friday night. This points to an even and closely contested tussle as defeat for either side would begin to make it awfully difficult to advance in to the finals series. Newcastle must fancy their chances of continuing their promising form as they come into this game on the back of their finest performance of the season.

Against the Heart, the Jets looked a completely different side, especially with the combination of Englishmen Michael Bridges and Emile Heskey in the front third.

The pace and power of Heskey was a perfect foil for the vision and class of Bridges and as a result the Jets looked more dangerous than they have all season.

Adam Taggart was also a standout in easily his finest display in a Newcastle jersey providing pace and was desperately unlucky not to end up on the score sheet.

Taylor Regan also provided some steel at the back which left Jets fans wondering just what he had done wrong to be dropped in the first place.

Newcastle fans will be praying that he delivers again because even though they have been a little off colour this season, the Roar still possesses some



The Odds

Jets 2.70
Draw 3.50
Roar 2.65

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #JETSvROAR

ABC Radio Coverage
- 1233 Newcastle, Grandstand Digital Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth & online

Another week, another must win for Jets and Roar

Referee: Lucein Laverdure

As A Matter Of Fact

- When these teams last met on 12 Jan 2013, Newcastle narrowly escaped with a 1-0 victory
- Newcastle Jets have failed to score multiple goals in any of their last eight matches against the defending champions
- Newcastle Jets have lost only once in their last six games at Hunter Stadium
- Brisbane Roar have conceded the first goal of the game 12 times this season, failing to mount a successful comeback on any occasion
- Brisbane Roar have managed to find the back of the net just twice in their last three away games

**Kiss of Death
Jets 2-1 Roar**

of the finest attacking quality in the competition.

Besart Berisha, Thomas Broich and Ben Halloran can turn on the style at any given moment meaning that the Jets will have to be switched on for the entire 90 minutes.

Jets captain Ruben Zadkovich will be key in this area. As good as his passing game has been this season he is still renowned for his willingness and ability to disrupt the ball movement of the opposition through his tackling and pressure.

With Zenon Caravella next to him he no longer has to worry about being the only man in the midfield who can build the attack which will only enable him to exert more energy in breaking up the Roar attacks. Brisbane are coming off what can

only be described as a lacklustre performance against Wellington last week with coach Mike Mulvey seemingly under pressure despite having just signed a two year contract extension.

Fans at Suncorp stadium unveiled a 'Mulvey Out' banner last week as they expressed their dismay at the performances of their side under their new manager.

How he would love for his players to answer the calls this weekend with a performance to launch his side back into the finals positions.

It will be a tight, tense and at times niggly contest due to the high stakes. Home ground advantage should be enough to get the home side over the line, just!

W Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory

By Alex Milic

It's a battle of teams at opposite ends of the table with the Wanderers sitting second, flying high after six consecutive wins while Perth are placed ninth, having snapped a five-game losing streak with a win against league-leaders Central Coast last weekend.

In their inaugural season, the Wanderers have surprised the competition to be equal-championship favourites alongside Central Coast. Only one-point behind Graham Arnold's league leading side, Western Sydney will have their sight sets on an unlikely minor premiership triumph before an assault on the final series.

The Wanderers have steadily rotated their squad during the campaign and have no significant injury problems. Midfield playmaker Aaron Mooy could be a candidate to start after being on the bench in the 2-1 win against Melbourne Victory while the versatile Shannon Cole will also be in contention.

Perth have endured a tumultuous few weeks which ended with the appointment of interim coach Alistair Edwards as Ian Ferguson's replacement and the surprising come-from-behind 2-1 victory against Central Coast. The upset lifted Glory off the bottom of the table and positions them only four points away from the top six.

The Glory also have no serious problems, however it was a surprise that new signing Matias Cordoba didn't feature against the Mariners after playing 15 minutes against Heart the week before. The Argentine could come into the match-day squad as Edwards will look to make minimal



Referee: Ben Williams

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #WSWvPG

ABC Radio Coverage - 702 Sydney, 1233 Newcastle & ABC Local Radio NSW, 720 Perth & ABC Local Radio WA & Grandstand Digital Sydney & Perth & online

The Odds

WSW 1.57
Draw 4.00
Glory 6.00

Reds Look To Bounce Back Against Victory

changes to a winning team.

The big issue
Wanderers – Can anyone stop the Wanderers as they set the competition alight? It doesn't really look like it at the moment. In an illustration of how impressive they have been defensively, Western Sydney have won seven of their ten away games this season. Coach Tony Popovic deserves immense credit for building the defence early in the season before the likes of Shinji Ono, Youssef Hersi and Mark Bridge have gelled in attack as the campaign has worn on. In their impressive win over Victory, players such as Mooy, Cole, Tarek Elrich and Rocky Visconte were not among the starters as the Wanderers look to be a serious title-winning contender.

Glory – Was last week's victory against Central Coast a one-off or is change the best thing for the Glory? Since Edwards has been given temporary control, the Young Socceroos assistant has impressed at every turn. Guiding his side to that shock win last weekend, Edwards had his side playing fluent, technical football after just three training sessions. When interviewed on The World Game on Monday, Edwards spoke like a seasoned professional and he "convinced" the viewer that he would turn the Glory around. Whether or not it was a one-off should become clearer on Saturday night.

**Kiss of Death
Wanderers 1-0 Glory**

As A Matter Of Fact

- Western Sydney are poised to make their 7th straight victory, a feat not achieved since the Victory made it to eight successive wins late 2006
- Perth Glory will be looking to turn around a 4-match losing streak away from home, but take into this game a poor away record winning just one from ten this season
- Perth Glory have scored just three goals in their last seven away fixtures
- The Wanderers may be consistently setting club records, but this weekend (should they play) will see Ante Covic and Mark Bridge play their 100th and 150th games respectively
- Western Sydney Wanderers have scored the first goal of the match on 14 occasions this season, more than any other team, and have failed to claim full points after doing so only twice



Wanderers Line Up

1. Ante Covic (GK)
2. Shannon Cole
3. Adam D'Apuzzo
4. Nikolai Topor-Stanley
5. Michael Beauchamp
6. Jerome Polenz
7. Labinot Haliti
8. Mateo Poljak
9. Dino Kresinger
10. Aaron Mooy
11. Tarek Elrich
13. Joey Gibbs
14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi
15. Reece Caira
16. Rocky Visconte
17. Youssef Hersi
18. Iacopo La Rocca
19. Mark Bridge
20. Jerrad Tyson (GK)
21. Shinji Ono
23. Jason Trifiro (Six to be omitted)

Ins: 11. Tarek Elrich, 13. Joey Gibbs, 14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi, 15. Reece Caira, 16. Rocky Visconte, 23. Jason Trifiro (all promoted)

Outs: nil

Unavailable: 12. Tahj Minniecon (foot season)



Glory Line Up

1. Danny Vukovic (gk)
2. Jack Clisby
5. Steve Pantelidis
6. Nick Ward
8. Dean Heffernan
9. Shane Smeltz
10. Liam Miller
11. Adrian Zahra
12. Ryo Nagai
13. Travis Dodd
14. Steven McGarry
15. Brandon O'Neill
17. Chris Harold
18. Matias Cordoba
19. Josh Risdon
21. Scott Jamison
22. Ndumba Makeche
23. Michael Thwaite
24. Storm Roux
30. Lewis Italiano (gk) (Five to be omitted)

Ins: 11. Adrian Zahra, 18. Matias Cordoba, 21. Scott Jamison, 22. Ndumba Makeche, 24. Storm Roux (all promoted)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: 7. Jacob Burns (back - TBA)

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HUNTER SPORTS SUPERSTORE





Heart Line Up

1. Clint Bolton (GK)
4. Simon Colosimo
5. Fred
8. Matthew Thompson
9. Dylan Macallister
11. Richard Garcia
13. Jonatan Germano
14. Golgol Mebrahtu
15. David Williams
16. Marcel Meeuwis
17. Jason Hoffman
18. David Vrankovic
20. Andrew Redmayne (GK)
21. Jamie Coyne
22. Nick Kalmar
25. Jeremy Walker
36. Eli Babalj
(Two to be omitted)

Ins: 9. Dylan Macallister,
17. Jason Hoffman, 18.
David Vrankovic

Outs: 6. Patrick Gerhardt
(suspended - card accu-
mulation)

Unavailable: 10. Josip
Tadic (broken toe – 3-5
weeks), 23. Mate Dugandz-
ic (broken foot – season)
24. Sam Mitchinson (quad
strain - two weeks)

Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC

By Andrew Bishara

Melbourne Heart versus Sydney FC games aren't usually hot-blooded affairs. But this week-end's clash will certainly have some fire in the belly.

For one, this is battle for finals. Sydney are sitting in fifth place, while the Heart are in eighth; however only three points separate the two clubs, and thanks to Sydney's poor defence record, a win for the Heart will see them leap over them.

That shouldn't distract football fans from Sydney's amazing turnaround. At the halfway point of the season, I wrote a report card and I detailed that, Sydney would need a miraculous switch of character if they were to make the finals, and instead they would probably be focusing on next season.

Instead, Frank Farina has instilled a mental toughness in the group, which has reaped rewards. They now fight for every ball, every tackle, unwilling to lose. More importantly, confidence has grown in the team, and Sydney look like winning games all of a sudden.

Farina also has complete control of the dressing room. His rift with Jason Culina, resulted in the mid-fielder leaving the club; with only one person in charge of the squad. More so, Sydney now has produced another big name signing.

And this is why, there's going to be some fireworks this weekend. Socceroo Lucas Neill has agreed to join the Sky Blues at the expense of going to the Heart.

It seemed that the Heart were on the verge of signing the former Blackburn and West Ham defender, when he decided to return home to

Referee: Alan Milliner

Neill's return to spark life in Heart Clash



Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #MHvSYD

ABC Radio Coverage - 774 & ABC Local Radio Victoria, Grandstand Digital Melbourne and Sydney & online

The Odds

Heart 2.40
Draw 3.50
SFC 3.00

Sydney. Heart chief executive Scott Munn said Neill had stretched some long-term friendships, especially with Heart coach John Aloisi, a good friend and former teammate of Neill's, after backtracking on a verbal agreement with the club.

Neill admitted that he sorry if he believed that he mislead the Heart in his signature for the club.

"To the Melbourne Heart board and to John Aloisi, I apologise if I gave too much of an indication that I was heading down to Melbourne and I wish them all the best" said Neill in his first training session for the Sky Blues.

"It was a difficult decision but an easy one from a family point of view, being born and raised in Sydney.

Aloisi admitted though, that he didn't need to hear any apology from

Neill regarding his decision.

"I don't need an apology from anyone, it's up to the person themselves," he said.

"Obviously, he feels bad about something he said to us and I'm not going to get into it. All I can say is, at certain times, it's the way you conduct yourself."

The game however, shouldn't be noted for clash between the two Socceroo friends, but rather the importance of the game. With both teams looking to cement themselves in the Top Six, this will be a tight contest, with no team looking to lose. Given Sydney's decent run and the Heart's consistent home form, an entertaining draw is the best bet.

**Kiss of Death
Heart 2-2 Sydney FC**

As A Matter Of Fact

Rhyan Grant broke the hearts of Heart fans with a late winner in the Sky Blues 2-1 victory against the younger Melbourne club early in the year

Melbourne Heart are the only team not to have claimed any points after conceding the opening goal of the game this season (9 times)

Melbourne Heart have not failed to score in consecutive matches since Round 4 this season

Sydney FC will be looking to equal their club record of three wins in succession when they face off against the Heart

Sydney FC are one of only two teams without a player who has played all 21 matches this season



Sydney FC Line Up

1. Ivan Necevski (gk)
2. Sebastian Ryall
3. Fabio
7. Brett Emerton
8. Adam Griffiths
9. Paul Reid
10. Alessandro Del Piero
12. Blake Powell
13. Tiago Calvano
15. Terry McFlynn
16. Joel Chianese
17. Terry Antonis
18. Trent McClenahan
20. Vedran Janjetovic (gk)
22. Ali Abbas
23. Rhyan Grant
26. Peter Triantis
29. Joel Griffiths
32. Lucas Neill
(Four to be omitted).

Ins: Joel Griffiths (returns from suspension), Lucas Neill (new signing), Ali Abbas (returns from suspension), Brett Emerton (returns from suspension)

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: Pascal Bosschaert (heel, season), Kruno Lovrek (knee, 4 weeks)

FFA launches Harmony through Football initiative

Football Federation Australia (FFA) CEO David Gallop and Sport and Multicultural Affairs Senator Kate Lundy have

unveiled the Harmony through Football program, a new initiative to celebrate football's diversity and inclusivity.

Football represents Australia's multicultural diversity with connection to more cultures, languages and ethnicities than any other sport.

The Harmony through Football initiative is the first formal FFA program directly linking our diverse player role models to the growing multicultural communities of Australia.

60 year three students from the Metella Road Public School along with stars of the Westfield W-League and Hyundai A-League joined together in Western Sydney on Thursday to announce the new initiative that aims to use football to help foster a sense of belonging, acceptance and understanding of other cultures.

The Harmony through Football program includes over 150 events for more than 17,000 participants in NSW and Victoria, culminating with three marquee Hyundai A-League matches in Melbourne and Sydney around Harmony Day (21 March) involving Melbourne Heart, Melbourne Victory, Sydney FC and Western Sydney Wanderers.

The program of events com-



enced last Sunday with a tournament co-ordinated by Melbourne Heart featuring Victoria Police, the Melbourne Chinese Soccer Association and the Australian Somali Football Association.

In 2013, FFA has a strategic plan to engage with multicultural communities, with a focus on Harmony Day, the official national celebration of cultural diversity.

"Football is the face of Australia and is a sport that truly reflects the cultural diversity of our nation," said FFA CEO David Gallop.

"With 1.7 million participants, football is Australia's most inclusive and accessible sport, one that bridges gender, age, linguistic, ethnic and religious divides.

"In 2012 FFA undertook a cultural audit of the A-League which showed that 87% of players have an overseas ancestry and 68% have

one or more parent born overseas, both well above the national average.

"Football's broad fan base similarly reflects this diversity and our aim to help foster this diversity through the Harmony through Football program," finished Gallop.

"Sport is a powerful unifier which brings together people from diverse backgrounds," Senator Lundy said.

"This initiative shows football living up to its status as the world game – a universal language and passion."

Along with the support from Minister Lundy, the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport and the Department for Immigration and Citizenship, SBS have also come on board to help drive the

program.

"SBS has always championed the sports which contribute to building communities. We are proud to be a partner in this great initiative which will help to inspire our younger generation of Australians from diverse backgrounds to connect with the champions of the game," said SBS Managing Director Michael Ebeid.

Further announcements on this partnership will be made in mid-March.

Harmony through Football will culminate with three major fixtures which will incorporate the Harmony message – these matches are Melbourne Heart v Western Sydney Wanderers and Sydney FC v Melbourne Victory on 16 March and Western Sydney Wanderers v Sydney FC on 23 March.

Hyundai Goal for Grassroots

Congratulations to Football Margaret River SC for being selected as the Hyundai Goals For Grassroots junior club for Round 21. By virtue of Perth Glory scoring 2 goals this round, the club received a \$3000 grant courtesy of Hyundai.

To nominate your club visit www.goalsforgassroots.com.au

Hot

It was a thrilling round of A-League football (but then, when isn't it?) last weekend, but what probably got lost among the hype of Victory vs. Wanderers and Lucas Neill's snub of Melbourne Heart (see below) was Alistair Edwards' dream debut as caretaker Perth Glory coach with a convincing 2-1 win over the pacesetter Mariners - particularly of pride to the Glory faithful given he's a WA boy and ex-Glory player in the

NSL days, and now he has put his coaching smarts honed at national youth-level to use for Glory. Whilst it is definitely in the national interest for Ali to resume his duties with our national youth-teams where he has adhered to the virtues of the National Curriculum, it is nonetheless a feelgood story in seeing him lend a helping hand to his old club, which has been pigeonholed by many as a last bastion of physical/hooft-ball play in an A-League now dominated by more tactical/technical-minded sides.

Not

There really isn't much Melbourne Heart can do in the wake of Lucas Neill's 11th-hour about-face but move on, after his opting to join hometown side Sydney FC instead

of linking up with John Aloisi and crew. Sadly Lucas has a reputation as something of a money-chaser so although his joining the Sky Blues actually sees him turning down a bigger offer from the Heart, it is still something that's become about as synonymous with him as his captaincy of the Soccerroos. We could speculate as to why he didn't choose to come home to play earlier instead of slaving away in the oil-rich but standard-sparse UAE league meanwhile, so it is unfortunate that his return has been overshadowed by other factors. Love him or not though, he is still national captain and a member of the Germany '06 'Golden Generation' so we should take the opportunity to watch Lucas play and see him giving back to the domestic scene in doing so.

- Alvaro Rodriguez



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Fred



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Thompson*



*David
Williams*



Autograph page

goal!
weekly

Planet Football

Burkina Faso



By Alvaro Rodriguez

NAME: Burkina Faso
CAPITAL: Ouagadougou
POPULATION: (2010 approx.) 15,730,977
CONFEDERATION: CAF
INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: African Nations Cup runners-up 2013
FIFA WORLD RANKING: 55th
AFRICAN NATIONS CUP APPEARANCES: 1978(as Upper Volta), 1996-2004, 2010-13
WORLD CUP APPEARANCES: N/A

WHO ARE YA?

Situated in West Africa, Burkina Faso is a republic bordered by six nations, most notably the Ivory Coast and Ghana. What is now Burkina Faso was first inhabited by nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes between 14000 and 5000 BC, with the region's first traces of permanent settlement dating back to circa 2500 BC.

In the centuries that followed, many tribes and clans settled in and around the area, most notably the Mossis who established a regal dynasty in the Middle Ages that incorporated elements of polytheistic idol-worship with Islam, the latter faith having been introduced to the area by Arab traders. There were also the Dogon, a superlative-primitive people who nevertheless boasted an uncanny level of astronomical knowledge, their



Burkinabe defender Bakary Koné in Lyon colours...

myths speaking about alien visitations in ancient times. Marcel Griaule, a French anthropologist who would study the Dogon from the 1930s-50s was left stumped as to how this apparently primitive society had acquired knowledge of the cyclical movement of the Sirius star - which is practically invisible to the naked eye.

From the 1600s onward the European colonial powers ventured frequently into West Africa, competing with each other for colonial possessions as well as for slaves to be transported to the New World. However this region was not claimed outright until the 1890s when the Mossi kingdom of Ouagadougou (the future capital's name) was subjugated by the French, ending resistance by the 'natives'. After a territorial-dispute resolution with the British, the French incorporated this into their French West Africa realm until its dissolution in the early 1960s and the declaration of 'The Republic of Upper Volta (named after the region's river basin)'.

Upper Volta's early years of independence were fraught with political instability, thankfully most of the coups staged against



...and in national colours(at left) jostling with Ghana's Asamoah Gyan at last month's African Nations Cup in South Africa.

the early governments were relatively bloodless. In 1984 President Thomas Sankara, a military captain officially changed the country's name to Burkina Faso(a combination of Mossi and Mande - another local ethnic group - words) which means 'Land of Honest People', as well as the red/green flag with gold star in use ever since.

Although the political system has stabilised somewhat in subsequent years, the country is still scorned for its disregard of human and civil rights in spite of the veneer of constitutional-parliamentary government.

SO WHAT YOU DONE?

Though Upper Volta/Burkina Faso gained independence in 1960, it didn't contest the African Nations Cup until 8 years later and it wasn't until Argentina '78 that they gave WC qualifying a crack. It was in that same year that they first qualified for the African Nations Cup, albeit being knocked out in the group stage finishing last in Group A to Ghana, Nigeria and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Afterward a barren international spell followed, their next continental appearance not coming

until 1996 held in South Africa. Again they finished last in a group containing Zambia, Algeria and Sierra Leone. However the following edition 2 years later, which they hosted, saw them qualify into the knockout rounds against realistic expectations, not least their upset 2-1 win over powerhouse Algeria. The Burkinabe then edged out Tunisia on penalties after pushing the Carthage Eagles to their limits, but alas the dream ended at the hands of the Egyptians in the semifinals, 2-0. To add salt to the wounds, the Burkinabe faltered in the 3rd-place match against DR Congo, losing on penalties.

Nonetheless they went on to qualify for every African Nations Cup between 1998 and 2006, albeit never progressing beyond the group stage. Two consecutive misses in 2006 and 2008 were then offset by qualification for every subsequent finals to date...in particular the recently-concluded edition in South Africa which saw them storm all the way to the Final against Nigeria, where the Super Eagles broke a 19-year drought to take home

the ANC trophy at the Burkinabe's expense. They could still be proud of their performances however, having held the Nigerians and then-reigning champs Zambia to draws in the group stage. The knockout stages had seen them eliminate the highly-fancied Togolese and Ghanaians, so the Burkinabe NT could do nothing but rightfully hold their heads high.

BIG CLUBS

The national league is known as the Burkinabé Premier League, and its two major clubs are ASFA Yennenga and Étoile Filante de Ouagadougou, both of which have won 12 national titles each, although ASFA only boasts 3 Burkinabe Cup wins in contrast to EF Ouagadougou's 20. Though both clubs have participated frequently in continental club competition, sadly they have no success to show for it.

REP YOUR COLORS

Nicknamed the Stallions, the Burkinabe NT wears all-green with red trims; the away replaces green with white. As for the clubs, ASFA wears yellow shirts



Just in case the GPS isn't working...

and socks with green shorts, whilst EF Ouagadougou wears the same template substituting green for navy-blue and yellow for white.

MATCHWINNERS

Though the Stallions boast a number of European-based pros, defender Bakary Koné(not to be confused with an Ivorian player) is arguably the best-known due to his playing for French giants Olympique Lyonnais aka. Lyon. Before joining Lyon in 2011, he'd amassed over 100 games in 5 years at fellow French club Guingamp; at present he has been capped 23 times for his country with no goals to date.

SO WHAT NOW?

Though losing the African Nations Cup Final will have hurt the Stallions, they can take heart from the achievement to spur them on to better international performances in future, not least that all-elusive maiden World Cup finals appearance.

Boo's World

SUMMER SERIES



By Mark Boric

Lucas Neill has joined Sydney FC after being on the verge of signing for Melbourne Heart. His former Socceroo team-mates Hayden Foxe and John Aloisi felt a bit duddled but he assures everyone it wasn't about the money. If it wasn't about the money, he probably shouldn't have had that last minute change of heart as it now looks like he's gone back on his word to his mates (and with mates your word should be the same as putting pen to paper on a contract).

Brisbane Roar put in one of the most embarrassing displays by any Aussies in Asia in a long time,

far worse than your average bogan in Bali. A "highlights" package of the horror on display would not look out of place in a sequel to the cult 1970's documentary Shocking Asia.

Still amazed at the differences between punishments issued by the FFA and FFV. The FFA do not seem to hold clubs responsible for the actions of their supporters at all, the opposite of how the FFV deals with "club associates". A club associate of an A-League team can be arrested for assaulting a police officer and the governing body will not sanction the club. A club associate of a team in the FFV senior competitions can swear at a referee and five figure fines and the loss of competition points will ensue.

For those that don't know, there was a heatwave in Melbourne over the last week and they don't have Foxtel on the beach I frequent, so I didn't catch much A-League action as usual over the last weekend. Noticed that Heart had their regular difficulties away, with Emile Heskey giving the boys at Soccer AM something to bring out their terrible Aussie accidents whilst replaying.



For some strange reason shirt sales at Western Sydney weren't as many as other clubs....

Sydney FC are gaining momentum, and caught the end of their win over Adelaide United. Frank Farina has secured a long term contract (get the beers in!) and all of a sudden the talk of Finals is serious.

The one game I saw in full was the Match of the Week, the Old Biggest Club in the League v the New Biggest Club in the League. It seemed every extra ever from

Fat Pizza, Swift and Shift Couriers and Housos converged on Melbourne to support the Wanderers, and the warm weather saw them exposing gaudy tattoos and hairy backs in roughly equal numbers.

Marcos Flores and Adrian Leijer were down on form for Victory, and had Youssef Hersi been on song it could have been a heavy defeat for the home side. Has all the talk of Liverpool and Juventus

scouts gotten to Marco Rojas? He is not so hot right now. Connor Pain did Malvern City proud with his maiden A-League goal, but it only proved to be a minor consolation for the Victory.

Cue the regular rant about Perth Glory being third up in a triple header being bedtime. A change in coach brought about a change in fortunes, as bottom beat top to swing the Premier's Plate

momentum all WSW's way. Under Alastair Edwards it seemed Glory were a lot better to watch, though I must admit to some channel surfing.

Having watched the Buriram debacle, I wouldn't have backed Brisbane to beat Nerds FC, but they proved too strong for the struggling Wellington Phoenix. Mike Mulvey can join Frank at the bar, he's got a new contract as well. Luckily Ricky Herbert has two jobs, so the security of one of them may not be too much cause for concern.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

A-League Champion 2012/13

Central Coast Mariners	3.60
Melbourne Victory	4.00
West Sydney Wanderers	4.00
Adelaide United	7.00
Sydney FC	11.00
Brisbane Roar	12.00
Newcastle Jets	15.00
Melbourne Heart	23.00
Perth Glory	34.00
Wellington Phoenix	61.00

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Couch Potato



* ALL TIMES ARE AEDT



Tuesday 26th February
08:30 am Liverpool TV - Liverpool v Swansea City

Friday 28th February
07:30 am Liverpool TV



FRIDAY 15TH FEBRUARY
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Sparta Prague v Chelsea 9:05am 1st Airing
UEFA Europa League Round of 32 1st
Leg Newcastle v Metalist 10:55am 1st
Airing
Bundesliga Round 22 Preview Show
12:45pm 1st Airing
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY
Bundesliga Round 22 Wolfsburg v Bayern
6:25am **LIVE**
npower League One Round 33 Tranmere
v Shrewsbury 8:30am 1st Airing
Copa Libertadores Second Stage Match-
day 1 Highlights Show 6:40pm 1st Airing

SUNDAY 17TH FEBRUARY
npower Championship Round 31 Crystal
Palace v Middlesbrough 1:55am **LIVE**
Bundesliga Round 22 Dortmund v Frank-
furt 4:25am **LIVE**
Eredivisie Round 23 PSV v Utrecht
6:40am **LIVE**
Bundesliga Round 22 Leverkusen v
Augsburg 12:25pm 1st Airing
SPL Round 27 Motherwell v Inverness
4:05pm 1st Airing

MONDAY 18TH FEBRUARY
Bundesliga Round 22 Nuremberg v Han-
nover 1:25am **LIVE**
Bundesliga Round 22 Hoffenheim v Stut-
tgart 3:25am **LIVE**
Primera Division Round 2 Tigre v Boca
Juniors 6:55am **LIVE**
Primera Division Round 2 River Plate v
Estudiantes 10:10am **LIVE**
Eredivisie Round 23 RKC v Ajax 1:30pm
1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 22 Highlights Show
7:00pm 1st Airing

TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY
Eredivisie Round 23 Twente v Willem II
12:40am 1st Airing
npower League One Round 33 Crawley v
Doncaster 6:40am **LIVE**
npower Championship Round 31 High-
lights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing
SPL Round 27 Highlights Show 7:30pm
1st Airing
Eredivisie Round 23 Highlights Show
8:00pm 1st Airing

THURSDAY 21ST FEBRUARY
Copa Libertadores Second Stage Match-
day 2 Fluminense v Gremio 10:55am **LIVE**

FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY
UEFA Europa League Round of 32 Lyon
v Tottenham 4:50am **LIVE**
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Liverpool v Zenit 6:55am **LIVE**
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Chelsea v Sparta Prague 9:45am 1st Airing
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Metalist v Newcastle 12:15pm 1st Airing
UEFA Europa League Round of 32
Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing
Bundesliga Round 23 Preview Show
8:00pm 1st Airing

SATURDAY 23RD FEBRUARY
Bundesliga Round 23 Freiburg v Frankfurt
6:25am **LIVE**
npower League One Round 34
Notts County v Bury 8:30am 1st Airing
Copa Libertadores Second Stage Match-
day 2 Highlights Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

SBS ONE
Sunday February 24th
10:30 am Football Asia
11:00 am UEFA Champions League
Magazinee

Monday February 25th
4:30 pm FIFA Futbol Mundial
11:00 pm The World Game

SBS TWO
Monday February 25th
9:30 pm The World Game

SEPARATED AT BIRTH



The genius of Mister Peabody and his side-
kick Sherman enabled them to fix problems
from an improbable History. Let's hope FFA
chief David Gallop has his own time machine
of sorts and can also do the trick.
Seen any uncanny doppelgangers lately?
Let us know on our facebook page and you could
win a prize.



ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE LIVE
Times listed are 7 minutes prior to kick-offs.

English Premier League

WEEK 28

Sat Feb 23 Fulham v Stoke

11.38 pm Fox 1

Sun Feb 24 QPR v Manchester United

1.53 am Fox 1

Sun Feb 24 Arsenal v Aston Villa

1.53 am Viewers Choice

Sun Feb 24 Norwich v Everton

1.53 am Viewers Choice

Sun Feb 24 Reading v Wigan

1.53 am Viewers Choice

Sun Feb 24 West Brom v Sunderland

1.53 am Viewers Choice

Mon Feb 25 Man City v Chelsea

12.15 am Fox 1

Mon Feb 25 Newcastle v Southampton

12.23 am Fox 3

Tue Feb 26 West Ham v Tottenham

6.53 am Fox 1

Hyundai A-League

All games **LIVE**

Fri Feb 22 Newcastle v Brisbane

7.30 pm Fox 1

Sat Feb 23 Western Sydney v Perth

5.30 pm Fox 1

Sat Feb 23 Central Coast v Melbourne

7.45 pm Fox 1

Sun Feb 24 Wellington v Adelaide

2.30 pm Fox 1

Sun Feb 24 Melbourne Heart v Sydney

5.00 pm Fox 1

FOX SPORTS FC

Every Tuesday 8.30 pm

Round 22: ASK THE EXPERTS

THE VERDICT

Jets (8) Roar (0) Draw (0) - Wanderers (1) Glory (7) Draw (0) - Mariners (7) Victory (0) Draw (1) - Phoenix (8) Adelaide (0) Draw (0) - Heart (3) Sydney FC (2) Draw (3)

SANTO CILAURO **50**

Jets
Wanderers
CCM
Phoenix
Heart
Last week: 3

CRAIG MACKENZIE **50**

Jets
Wanderers
Mariners
Phoenix
Heart
Last week: 3

EDDIE KRNEVIC **46**

Jets
Wanderers
Draw
Phoenix
Draw
Last week: 4

PETER KATHOLOS **45**

Jets
Wanderers
Mariners
Phoenix
Heart
Last week: 4

ROGER SLEEMAN **54**

Jets
Wanderers
Mariners
Draw
Heart
Last week: 3

ANDY HARPER **44**

Newcastle
Perth
Draw
Adelaide
Heart
Last week: 3

JOHN DOYLE **46**

Jets
Wanderers
Mariners
Wellington
Sydney FC
Last week: 4

KISS OF DEATH **51**

Jets
Draw
Draw
Adelaide
Sydney FC
Last week: 2



NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES

ACT COUNTDOWN

By Russ Gibbs

Tuggeranong United FC has one goal for the 2013 National Premier League: Capital Football season –to earn back the respect of the competition. That's the message coming out of the valley club ahead of the new campaign as the team re-groups under a new coaching line-up with changes behind the scenes on the executive committee, according to Technical Director Jimmy Bland.

Bland, now in his third season as TD at Tuggeranong United having previously enjoyed spells as both player and coach, was adamant that regaining the respect of the rest of the league was vital to the development of the club under the new National Competition Review (NCR) legislation. "It's all about that respect this year," Bland said. "I have held a recent coaches meeting with all the guys and we went through everything I want them to achieve this year. I didn't give them any individual goals, I gave them a collective goal and that was to regain the respect that Tuggeranong United deserve within the Premier League.

"I remember twenty years ago when I came over from the UK, Tuggeranong United were THE club of the ACT. We were winning Federation Cup's we were winning championships, we were getting into reserve Grand Finals and under-19 Grand Finals. We have lost our way a little bit. We have taken our eye off the ball and got on a different path. Now we are getting the ship back on course and it's all about regaining that respect. We have some good players and good coaching staff with a strong committee behind us and now the players have got to replicate the hard work that's gone on off the field and if it's produced in the field then I think certain teams will not want to play us."

Whilst the first grade squad, barring one or two tweaks, is very similar in make-up to last year's team, there has been plenty of movement behind the scenes with the



With a strong pre-season under its belt Tuggeranong United hopes to be amongst the title chasing honours in 2013.

introduction of Premier League competitions for the under-14 and under-12 age grades precipitating the need for new coaching talent in the ranks. "We have got a lot of new faces now that we have Premier League under-12 and under-14 squads," Bland confirmed. "We have introduced a couple of youth coaches who are prepared to work hard. We have got Matt Selems in the under-12 and Mauro Charles in the under-14 and both are knowledgeable about the youth players in the ACT, especially in the Tuggeranong area, so they will both be valuable assets to the club."

The departure of leading scorer Mark Shields in the summer, the joint ACT Premier League Golden Boot winner for 2012 signing for Canberra Olympic, as well as goalkeeper Matt McDonald means United do need to strengthen in some areas hence the introduction of former Woden Valley youngsters Jack Pettit and Mouad Zwed into the squad. And, unlike in previous year's, Tuggeranong now has some financial backing in order to compete at the top end of the table. "It's a little bit difference this year as we do have the finances," Bland admitted. "We have a strong senior executive committee who were aligned to the junior club and they are prepared to throw a little bit of money our way. They've come to me and said money is not an issue and if I deem there is a good player out

there that I think is suitable for the club then we'll target that player. We have two or three options still undecided where we have got to have meetings with a couple of guys, but I think in previous years we have been known as a development club and a feeder team for the bigger clubs but this year is different. We have got some financial backing and we are prepared to use it but we are not going to throw it away." Plenty of names have been linked to United as the pre-season rumour mill and transfer merry-go-round gets into full swing but Bland is resolute that the 1991 and 1992 Grand Final winners will not be taking on just any old player out to make a bit of cash on the side.

"Any new player would have to suit the dynamics of the club," Bland stressed. "We are hoping to be a possession based football club, right through from under-12 to first grade and we want to keep possession and to play football in the right manner. A new recruit would have to suit our club. We don't have too many egos and attitudes to be perfectly honest, we look at our young players and look at their personalities as well as their skill level and their ability level and if we are talking to players it must suit the club. They must be a good fit in the dressing room and they must show some leadership both on the field and off the field."



So what is a realistic appraisal of United's chances in 2013? It's fair to say expectations are high but, as Bland re-iterated, the club has a long way to go to get back to the glory days of the early nineties.

"We are not getting too ahead of ourselves," he said. "Obviously we have got a new structure in place with John [Bull] coming in as new coach. We have got two or three new faces in the first grade squad as well. Having said that though we are not going to get too carried away, we understand that there is a lot of hard work to be done pre-season and the guys have put in a lot of hard work.

"Tuggeranong United is renowned for developing our young players, our young talented players. We nurture them through from an early age right through to the senior level. We have got three boys playing in first grade now that were given an opportunity last year and you have to give them an opportunity. It's no use saying we 'think you're good enough' we have to put them in an environment where they have to make tough decisions.

"That's the only way that decisions can be made when you see them out on the field playing against good opposition. We have got a lot of young players coming through and that's what we like to see. We do care about young players and we develop them slowly. Sometimes we can shortcut their development process, but the good players will always rise to the top and play at a good level. That's what we are trying to find at Tuggeranong." With vision and leadership at the helm and across the club structure the future is certainly looking bright for one of the ACT's largest and most storied clubs.

The first round of the newly branded National Premier League: Capital Football kicks off on Saturday 10th March.

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Kalmar reckons Neill chose wrong club



MACCA AT LARGE

With Craig MacKenzie

NICK Kalmar is in a better place now, no longer haunted by the prospect of an early end to a blossoming professional football career.

In late 2011 it was so much different. He'd had a great first season in the A-League making 17 starts for Melbourne Heart but had laboured throughout the following pre-season with regular back pain. At first it was thought he was suffering from muscle spasms but things didn't improve. Kalmar was dropped after round two of the 2011/12 season and next weekend flew to Sydney to play for Heart's youth team.

"I remember after that youth game I couldn't even bend down and take off my boots," said the midfielder.

He was sent for scans which identified stress fractures in his lower back and the initial outlook was gloomy.

He was told he'd be out of action for at least three months and he'd have to wear a back brace for the first eight weeks of rehabilitation. Worse still, he was told that some athletes never recover from this type of injury.

"I was really stressed early on but we were very lucky to have a sports physio like Martin Wollin at Heart and he was fantastic for me. He got me involved with Pilates and introduced me to a friend who specialised in rehab for back injuries.

"I wasn't really at the club much during this time but once I saw improvement from the Pilates and the core strength exercises I started to get confident.

"Unfortunately Martin isn't with the club any more but I think, and all the boys do, that he's one of the best sports physios in Australia. He helped me get back to where I am and I owe him big time."

There are a few people Kalmar owes big time particularly the one constant throughout his career, his uncle Ivan Istuk who played with Sunshine George Cross in the old National Soccer League.

"He's been a mentor for me. He trained with me when I was young and he's still with me now. He gives me advice and we always work through things together. He's been a massive influence in my career."

And what a colourful career it's been, in fact Kalmar's CV reads like a multicultural tour of Victorian football.

From Melbourne Knights to Altona East to Preston to St Albans to Italy for a short spell to Sunshine George Cross to Oakleigh and finally to Heart.

The 25-year-old has played for



Nick Kalmar celebrates with Mark Thompson after scoring for Melbourne Heart in the 2-0 win over Perth Glory recently. Photo: ANITA MILAS

clubs of Croatian, Greek, Macedonian and Maltese backgrounds and despite the promise he showed at an early age he never played in a state junior representative side and never was invited to try out for a scholarship with the old VIS.

Kalmar sees himself as a great example of what can be achieved outside established development pathways.

"I know a lot of boys that didn't make the Vic teams or the VIS and a lot of them aren't even playing football now but for me I wanted to learn to play senior football at a young age," said Kalmar.

"I wanted to toughen up and put myself under pressure.

"My message to young players out there who haven't gone through the usual development pathway is to keep working hard. Keep training hard because the A-League is such a fantastic opportunity for young players in this country to aspire to.

"We have a great professional set-up right here in our own backyard so try to make a name for yourself in the Premier League or in the State Leagues.

"There are people out there watching and if you make a name for yourself you'll give yourself a chance of being snapped up.

"I had to perform and make a name for myself in the Victorian Premier League and the platform it gave me was huge."

"My message to young players out there who haven't gone through the usual development pathway is to keep working hard. Keep training hard because the A-League is such a fantastic opportunity for young players in this country to aspire to."

Kalmar reserves special praise for former Socceroo Charlie Egan who introduced the teenager to senior football at Altona East.

"I always thought that it was best for my development to play senior football as soon as possible rather than going through the reserves and Charlie was fantastic for me.

"I had two seasons at Altona East and I can tell you that he was a very fair guy. If I played well and trained well then he'd reward me with games but if I didn't play well he'd tell me and put me on the bench.

"He had me on the bench early

on but I came off the bench and scored a couple of goals and eventually got into the team. He never cared about age. If you were good enough you played.

"I think I was 17 that second year and that's when I learned what it was like to win and what it was like to lose. I really grew and developed under Charlie Egan and it was incredible how much I learned in that one year."

A short stint at Preston followed under Vlado Vanis but when he was replaced by Goran Lozanovski it was back to the reserves for Kalmar who decided to move on.

He played with St Albans before trialling in Italy with a lower-league outfit, which offered him a contract but couldn't arrange a work permit.

Kalmar's next port of call was Chaplin Reserve in 2007 under George Cross senior coach Joe Montemurro but his next move was to provide him with the springboard that eventually catapulted him into the A-League.

"I had two seasons at Altona Magic (2008, 2009) and we won the Grand Final both seasons but the second season was a breakout one for me. I started almost every game and was consistent, played in the Grand Final and won the club's best and fairest.

"To do that in a team that had good quality players like Carl Recchia, Steve Laurie and Pece Siveski was a massive achievement because there was a lot of pressure to perform."

His exploits didn't go unnoticed.

John Anastasiadis was the Oakleigh boss and he lured the youngster to Jack Edwards Reserve for the 2010 season but just nine games into his Cannons career he signed a one-year deal with the fledgling Heart.

Partway through Kalmar's impressive first season at elite level he signed a two-year extension with Heart which runs out at the end of this season. Not that he's particularly concerned.

"I've had a little bit of feedback from the club, not too much, but I'm pretty confident that if I get more game time things will take of themselves."

Maybe his agent, Lou Sticca, could give "things" a gentle nudge in the right direction.

As for Heart's immediate prospects, Kalmar remains upbeat.

"We truly believe that we are a better team than the position we're in.

"There's no secret that we've lost key players (overseas), players that were really important to us.

"We've had times when we've had an unbalanced line-up whereas other teams have been more solid and had virtually the same line-up week-in week-out which is a big advantage.

"We think we're good enough to make the finals and we really feel that we're good enough to challenge any team. We've already proven that this season against Victory and Central Coast."

What also has been evident this season is a defensive frailty that calls into question just how good Heart is without the ball.

"What we've found out is that if



A Bailey Wright fan on Table Mountain overlooking Cape Town South Africa.

our structures haven't been right and we have not set up the way the coaches want us to then we have fallen apart a little and we have leaked goals.

"But when we have good structure we keep clean sheets."

Structure and clean sheets will be uppermost in Kalmar's thoughts then going into Sunday's AAMI Park battle with Sydney FC.

Apart from one minor distraction which arose earlier this week with Sydney snatching Lucas Neill from Heart's grasp.

"We've got the chance on Sunday to show him he made the wrong choice," said Kalmar.

"We've got a great club here. There are great people involved and there's a real family feel to our club.

"I don't know the guy personally and good luck to him but he definitely chose the wrong club."

Westley out, Wright in

WHEN Bailey Wright eventually writes his memoirs it will be a spellbinding football journey that will also involve off-field intrigue and far flung fans.

The intrigue will lie in the manner in which he was removed from the transfer list during the last English off-season and the far-flung fan is a young woman who sent Wright her photo via Twitter as she stood atop Table Mountain in South Africa a few days ago.

But putting pen to paper is the furthest thing from the mind of 20-year-old Wright who is enjoying a breakout season at Preston North End in League One albeit that things have gone awry off the field for the famous Lancashire club.

Graham Westley was sacked as Preston manager last week after just 13 months in charge and the

team sitting in the wrong half of the table.

When Wright first went to Preston in 2009 Alan Irvine was the boss but he soon made way for Darren Ferguson who in turn made way for Phil Brown who eventually was replaced by Westley.

Preston's new caretaker manager, John Dreyer, was Westley's assistant and he enjoyed his first game in charge last weekend as his men beat league leader Bournemouth 2-0 at Deepdale.

The match also marked a memorable return from suspension for Wright. He'd captained the side for the first time in the league in a 2-2 home draw with Coventry in late January but was sent off in a loss away from home to Colchester on 9 February.

That meant he missed the 3-1 away loss to Yeovil that sounded the death knell for Westley.

But last weekend Wright returned to first team action in style with a commanding defensive display highlighted by scoring Preston's second goal following a free-kick on the half-hour mark.

His performance received rave reviews and the youngster gained his first ever selection in the League One Team of the Week.

Wright and Preston remain in talks over a new contract. His current deal runs out at the end of the season and there are plenty of clubs sniffing around.

Wright is happy at Preston and is prepared to stay there in fact he's keen to buy a house in the local area should he sign on again.

For now both club and Wright's agent are tossing figures to and fro and we'll keep you updated on the outcome of these ongoing discussions.

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VICTORIA'S LEADER IN TEAM WEAR

Blast From The Past



By Roy Hay

Some readers may wonder how the ideas for the stories which appear in this column are generated. It would be nice to say that they were all planned long in advance and thoroughly researched before being written. But the truth is that sometimes they have to be done in a mad rush between other commitments, especially when the writer is on the move, and has to draw on whatever comes to hand. This week it is a series of scans of pictures of Australian teams from the 1960s and 1970s which provides the focus. Some of these will be new to readers, others have not been reproduced very often, but they should all bring back memories for older readers and perhaps introduce some ideas and names for younger ones.

The oldest of this selection is the Australian squad which played against Everton at the Sydney Showground on 16 May 1964. Everton was the first big team to arrive in Australia after the Australian Soccer Federation was set up in 1962. In those days matches against visiting club teams were the highlight of the season with big crowds often divided between supporters of the touring team and home fans. The match ended, as these often did, in a big win for the visitors, 5-1 in this case. The picture has the whole squad and it appeared in the Soccer World Annual in 1965. Soccer World, edited by Andrew Dettre, was the leading New South Wales football newspaper, which began as the mouthpiece of the New South Wales Federation, but soon began to assert a spiky independence.

Move forward a few years to 1970 and we find Rale Rasic's Azteca warriors according to the caption to this picture, again from Soccer World. Rasic, newly appointed coach of the national team, took a squad on a long world tour which

A Pictorial Football Blast From The Past



Australian squad v Everton, 1964. Back row: Pat Woods, Adams, Mike Zurecki, Mat Woods, Barry Salisbury, Herbert Ninaus, Graham Barnett, Audato Iglesias, Leo Baumgartner, McGuire, Front row: Kaz Kowalek, Frank Micic, Les Scheinflug, Vic Reynolds, Edwards. Soccer World Annual, 1965.

culminated in a match in the national stadium in Mexico City. This was the venue for probably the best World Cup of all that year, won spectacularly by Pele's Brazil. Australia went down by three goals to nil. Near the end Ray Richards was sent off. He threw the ball at the Mexican captain and was dismissed. Soccer World published this picture about a year later pointing out that only three of this line-up had been selected to play against Israel in a series of friendly matches, but of course most of the squad for the Mexico game did go to Germany in 1974.

Earlier on the 1970 tour Australia pulled off one of the great upsets in its long football history by beating a full strength Greece in Athens by three goals to one. This picture shows Jim Mackay shaking hands with the disconsolate Greek captain Dimitris Domazos. Adrian Alston, Mackay and George Blues scored for Australia and Kostas Eleftherakis for Greece.

A couple of years later the Socceroos gathered in Melbourne for a training session during which this informal team shot was taken. It appeared in the Age and accompanied an article in which the readers were informed that far



Dimitris Domazos and Jimmy Mackay shake hands after Australia beat Greece in Athens in 1970. Source: Soccer World, 1970.

from being a bunch of imports with unpronounceable names the squad consisted largely of players who were born in Australia.

Finally Anton Cermak's shot of the West German goalkeeper Sepp Maier flying over Branko Buljevic during the Socceroos World Cup game against the eventual champion in Hamburg on 18 June 1974 shows the full house for this match. Australia bowed out at the group stage after a draw in its final match against Chile, but the team put the game in this country on the map, domestically and overseas.



Sepp Maier flies over Branko Buljevic during the World Cup finals group match in Hamburg in 1974. Photo: Anton Cermak.



Azteca warriors, 1970: Back row, left to right: Ray Richards, Peter Wilson, Jack Reilly, Sandy Irvine, Adrian Alston, Jimmy Mackay. Front row: Johnny Warren, Archie Blues, Roche, Denton, Col Curran. Source: Soccer World, 12 November 1971, p. 5.



Socceroos in Melbourne: Left to right: Jimmy Rooney, Johnny Warren, Manfred Schaefer, Jim Mackay, Jimmy Milisavljevic, Harry Williams, Billy Vojtek, Col Curran, Ray Richards, Jim Fraser, Ernie Campbell, Doug Utjesenovic. Age, 21 October 1973.

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Pascoe Vale remain two points clear at the top

Rounds 18 of the Futsal Oz V-League

On a hot Sunday afternoon for round 18 of Nike V-League the action sizzled on court with teams looking to build a good run home to challenge for the title. Pascoe Vale still remains 3 points clear at the top of the ladder, with Hume FC and Vic Vipers hot on there heels.

Maxi Avram shines against Brighton

A Maxi Avram hat-trick help guide the Vipers to victory over the re-juvenated Brighton FC. Vipers were made to work hard to get the points as Brighton were well organized at the back. With the Vipers pushing for the title they had more to play for as they went on to take the points in a even contest.

Vic Vipers FC 3 (M. Avram 3) def. **Brighton FC 1** (H. Shamon)

Ashburton Kruei Fitzroy

Lucas Kruei has again turned on the style to help guide Ashburton to Victory against Fitzroy FC. The Brazilian scored a Hat-trick and got an assist, however he was well supported by his teams mates and the passing and movement was too hot for Fitzroy to handle. Fitzroy tried to play and got rewarded for their effort with 3 goals but it was too little to late as the went down 7-3.

Ashburton FC 7 (L. Kruei 3, R. Ferguson, M. Rocca, A. Farina, A. Areggin def. **Fitzroy FC 3** (I. Filipovic 2, T. Fitzpatrick)

Juso Jalandzija returns with 6 goals

Metropolitan FC bag 11 goals as they down Essendon 11-5. Juso Jalandzija scored 6 goals on his return from outdoor commitments and was will assisted by Metro stalwart Alija Redzepovic who chimed in with 4 goals. Alex Cobo's Essendon side looked good in patches but they ran out of legs in the hot conditions as Metro took the points.

Metropolitan FC 11 (J. Julardzija 6, A. Redzepovic 4, D. Redzepovic def. **FC Essendon 5** (B. Vanega 3, A. Cobo, A. Osorio)

Hume Banging in goals for Fun

Hume FC are the inform team of the competition and they are running rampart as they score another 17 goals against FC Prahran. Nike



V-League Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1 Pascoe Vale FC	18	15	2	1	127	63	+60	47
2 Hume FC	18	14	2	2	168	51	+117	44
3 Vic Vipers FC	18	13	3	2	86	57	+29	42
4 Metropolitan FC	18	12	0	6	131	87	+44	36
5 Ashburton FC	18	11	2	5	88	52	+36	35
6 Moreland FC	18	10	0	8	97	121	-24	30
7 Fitzroy FC	18	8	1	9	74	77	-3	25
8 CF Brunswick	18	6	0	12	72	91	-19	18
9 FC Prahran	18	4	1	13	81	127	-46	13
10 FC Essendon	18	4	0	14	59	127	-68	12
11 FC Balwyn	18	3	1	14	77	157	-80	10
12 Brighton FC	18	2	0	16	48	97	-49	6

Round 18 Clashes Friday February 17

Moreland FC 6-1 FC Balwyn
Ashburton FC 7-4 Fitzroy FC
CF Brunswick 2-6 Pascoe Vale FC
Metropolitan FC 11-5 FC Essendon
Brighton FC 1-3 Vic Vipers FC
Hume FC 17-6 Prahran FC

Round 19 Clashes Sunday February 24

2:00pm - Vic Vipers FC vs. FC Balwyn
3:00pm - Pascoe Vale FC vs. FC Essendon
4:00pm - Ashburton FC vs. Hume FC
5:00pm - Metropolitan FC vs. Fitzroy FC
6:00pm - Brighton FC vs. CF Brunswick
7:00pm - Moreland FC vs. FC Prahran

Top Goal Scorers

1 Vadim Mazurskiy - Hume FC	40
2 Alija Redzepovic - Metropolitan FC	35
3 Burukhan Koca - Moreland FC	30
4 Juso Jalandzija - Metropolitan FC	30
5 Sofiane Soufi - Pascoe Vale FC	28

The Futbol Town Show every Tuesday 6.30pm on C31 and C44Digital



V-League leading scorer Vadim Mazurskiy score 8 to extend his lead at the race to the golden boot title. Hume coach Armin Keddad was not happy with his side conceding 5 goals as they took their foot off the gas, however he was impressed with his teams attacking form in recent weeks.

Hume FC 17 (V. Mazurskiy 8, M. Vargovski 3, S. Cicek2 , G. Harisson, R. Culculoglu, C. Munoz, C. Cicekdag) def. **FC Prahran 5** (J.

Dawood 3, E. Benjamin, A. Drego)

Pascoe Vale stay top for another week

Pascoe Vale FC bounced back from their defeat to Vipers last week with a 6-2 victory over CF Brunswick. In a spirited match Pascoe Vale were back to their attacking best with Jose Portillo scoring a hat-trick, Joao Da Silva also broke his goal drought for Pascoe Vale with a well take free kick. CF

Brunswick looked dangerous early but the quality of the Pascoe Vale squad was too much for Brunswick to handle.

Pascoe Vale FC 6 (J. Portillo 3, J. Da Silva, F. Tadashi, E. Simsek) **CF Brunswick 2** (J. Slovacek, N. Yao)

Moreland take points against Balwyn

Moreland continued their good start to 2013 with a convincing win over the struggling FC Balwyn.

Burukhan Koca was the star for Moreland with a sublime hat-trick that help guide his side to the 3 points. Balwyn have been struggling of late and will need a big turn around if they are to avoid relegation.

Moreland FC 6 (B. Koca 3, S. Kolay 2, T. Korkmaz) def. **FC Balwyn 1** (R. Rashidi)

An advertisement for the FUTSAL OZ Store. It features a collection of sports apparel including various colored jerseys (orange, red, yellow, green, black), shorts, and socks. The text 'FUTSAL OZ' is prominently displayed in blue and green, with a large 'Store' in red below it. The Nike logo is also visible.

An advertisement for the FUTSAL OZ Store. It features a woman with long blonde hair holding a sign that lists the categories: 'Juniors', 'Men', 'Women', 'Mixed', and 'Elite'. The FUTSAL OZ logo is in the top left corner.

A row of social media icons: Twitter, Google+, Facebook, RSS, YouTube, and C31.

-futsaloz.com.au -1300 788 799 -407 Victoria St, Brunswick Vic

NYL title to be decided on final day of the season

By Daniel Quinn

The 2012/13 National Youth League (NYL) winner will be determined on the last day of the season as the Victory lost and the Mariners won in Round 17, while there were also wins for Brisbane, Newcastle and Perth.

Round 17 got underway on Saturday with a thrilling 4-3 win for the Brisbane Roar over the AIS, where the Roar came from three goals down at the break to complete a stunning comeback. The AIS took 26 minutes to open the scoring as Marc Marino headed a nice Steve Kuzmanovski cross, before Marino completed his brace three minutes later with a drilled effort. Just before the break Todd Norris found Dylan Smith who made no mistake with a tap in giving the AIS a 3-0 lead.

Marc Ochieng's send off just before the interval changed the contest as Brisbane came out a different side.

Firstly Patrick Theodore slotted past AIS 'keeper Lucas Spinella, before Benjamin Litfin finished past Spinella with the outside of his foot.

Matt Thurtell was the hero for the Roar in spectacular fashion with a screaming strike into the top corner on 80 minutes, before the striker's sensational half-volley completed the stunning comeback five minutes before time. On Sunday, Kale Bradbery's hat-trick helped the Newcastle Jets thrash Adelaide United 6-1 at Wanderers Oval.

The Reds, however, opened the scoring just after eight minutes as Thomas Briscoe fantastically volleyed home from the edge of the box.

Shortly before the interval Brandon Lundy finished comfortably from a goalmouth scramble.

Ten minutes after the resumption Bradbery slotted in Jacob Pepper's cutback to give the Jets the lead, before Andrew Hoole guided his



Victory's Spase Dilevski sails in to try and block the lob by Joe Gibbs (WSW). Jimmy Jeggo follows up.

Photo: JOHN PUNSHON

attempt into the bottom corner on 65 minutes. Bradbery then finished inside the near post, before Radovan Pavicevic coolly slotted the fifth with four minutes left. Four minutes was all Bradbery needed to duly complete his hat-trick in stoppage-time. In Perth, the Perth Glory comfortably beat the Melbourne Heart 4-1 at Intiga Stadium. Argentine Matias Cordoba opened the scoring on 28 minutes side-footing a Matthew Davies cross past Heart 'keeper Alastair Bray. Five minutes into the second-half ex-Heart winger Adrian Zahra doubled the lead heading in at the back post, before Borbor Sam sealed the win with twelve minutes

left. Slobodan Vulin then capped off the win with the fourth guiding in from a scramble. But Andrew Mullett did head an Andrew Cartanos cross in to earn the Heart a late consolidation. At Cromer Park the Central Coast Mariners, like the Jets and Glory, eased past their opponents, the Sydney FC with a 4-0 victory. The Mariners kicked the scoring off on the half-hour mark as Adam Jenner converted Patrick Dixon's cross. Four minutes before the interval Dixon had a goal of his own bundling home at the back post. Keiren Paull then added the third on 70 minutes with a neat finish after an interchange of passes with

Aaron Peterson. Jenner then extended the lead with a stunning fourth from long range to complete his double. The Melbourne Victory only needed to beat the Western Sydney Wanderers at SS Anderson to claim the NYL title, but Darren Davies' boys loss 4-3. The Wanderers deservedly took the lead just after 8 minutes as Joey Gibbs converted from the spot after Kwabena Appiah-Kubi was fouled in the box. Just before the half-hour mark Nicholas Olsen was found at the back post, beat Kobbie Boahene and poked past Tando Velaphi to give the Wanderers a two-goal lead. Shortly after Jason Trifiro and

Jake McGing combined superbly through the centre before finding Gibbs who simply tapped in the third from a couple yards out. The Victory came out after the break and pulled one back as Chris Cristaldo blasted into the bottom corner. But Western Sydney seemed to have sealed the win as Trifiro's weak attempt crept under Velaphi. The Victory then made the last moments tense as Cristaldo headed in his and Victory's second with three minutes left. Dylan Murnane then grabbed the third with a brilliant drilled effort from outside the box a minute from time. The Victory and Central Coast Mariners meet next weekend in the last round with the result determin-

Round 17 Results

Perth Glory 4 (Corboda 28, Zahra 50, Sam 78, Vulin 82)
Melbourne Heart 1 (Mullett 89)

Newcastle Jets 6 (Lundy 36, Bradbery 55, 73, 90, Hoole 64, Pavicevic 86)
Adelaide United 1 (Briscoe 8)

Melbourne Victory 3 (Cristaldo 50, 87, Murnane 89)
Western Sydney Wanderers 4 (Gibbs 7, 35, Olsen 29, Trifiro 65)

Sydney FC 0
Central Coast Mariners 4 (Jenner 30, 81, Dixon 41, Paull 70)

AIS 3 (Marc Marino 26, 29, Dylan Smith 39)

Brisbane Roar 4 (Patrick Theodore 58, Benjamin Litfin 71, Matthew Thurtell 80, 85)

NYL Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	P
1 Melbourne Victory	17	12	0	5	57	20	37	36
2 CC Mariners	17	12	0	5	38	27	11	36
3 Newcastle Jets	17	10	1	6	53	33	20	31
4 Brisbane Roar	17	8	3	6	36	33	3	27
5 Perth Glory	17	8	1	8	44	43	1	25
6 Melbourne Heart	17	8	1	8	31	31	0	25
7 Adelaide United	17	6	4	7	34	39	-5	22
8 WS Wanderers	17	6	4	7	27	40	-13	22
9 Sydney FC	17	5	3	9	38	46	-8	18
10 AIS	17	1	1	15	21	67	-46	4

Final Round Fixtures

Saturday 23 February KO 2:00 PM
AIS v Adelaide United
AIS Athletics Track

Saturday 23 February KO 3:00 PM
Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC
John Cain Memorial Res, Thornbury

Saturday 23 February KO 5:00 PM
Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar
Wanderers Oval, Broadmeadow

Saturday 23 February KO 4:45 PM
CC Mariners v Melbourne Victory
Bluetongue Stadium, Gosford

Sunday 24 February KO 3:00 PM
Western Sydney v Perth Glory
Cook Park, St Marys

All KO times ae AEDT

ing the 2012/13 winners in a grand finale. The Victory only need a draw to claim their first title, whilst the Mariners need to win to defend their crown.



Joe Gibbs (WSW) and Daniel Chaabani (Victory) clash.

Photos: JOHN PUNSHON



Nick Olsen (WSW) with Kwabena Boahene (Victory) on his tail.

Photo: JOHN POUNSHON

Santo, Sam & Ed Podcast

Santo Cilauro, Sam Pang and Ed Kavalee are back in town with their own unique take on events of the week.

Their brief is simple - 7 days, 3 guys, no agenda.

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“EL MISTER” ENGINEER UNPLUGGED



Leaving aside Málaga's first leg round of 16 tie against Porto in the UEFA Champions League, Manuel Pellegrini is the Chilean tactician who continues to reach heights.

Occasionally confused by journalists as Argentinian and even Italian, Pellegrini can be featured in other sections of Goal!Weekly but deserves a special for the legacy he has left with his previous clubs.

Starting off his coaching career at Universidad de Chile, inspired and “obliged” by coaching great Fernando Riera he began to witness his side collapse and eventually relegated to the country's second division for the only time in its history.

Without a doubt that experience changed him, to improve his vision for finding youth players, modifying positions and reading the development of matches from the sideline. After all, the transition from player to coach is not an easy task at all.

It was at LDU de Quito in Ecuador where Pellegrini found success. Working with Fernando Díaz alongside him as assistant, Ecuadorian football was taken by storm with a high-pressing game where the ball was priority.

Here is Pellegrini's key success to his methods and playing style. He says it is plain and simple. Ball work, ball work and more ball work, where today with Málaga in Spain's La Liga the side is fighting in European position and currently in a second-round tie against Porto in the UEFA Champions League.

During the 1991-92 Chilean domestic season with Palestino, defender Andrés Gómez fondly remembers Pellegrini's notable use of applied psychology in the dressing room.

He was caught surprisingly painting the clubhouse interior walls in the early morning to light up the rooms and the players' mood as a team group.

It has always been the fine details that have made Pellegrini the difference amongst his colleagues.

With San Lorenzo de Almagro in Argentina he guided the side to a Copa Mercosur title, the first and only continental triumph for the “Gauchos de Boedo” meanwhile for all of his success before he tried out Europe, along the years when he moved to Belgium and France to get his coaching badges, there were very low points.

Not winning anything with a club at the end of the year is a sour and dull taste nevertheless enduring the suicide of a player in your own team roster left a mark.



The reputation of Malaga's Chilean tactician Manuel Pellegrini continues to grow in world football.

It was in 1994 with Chilean giants Universidad Católica where international defender Raimundo Tupper took his life after battling depression by collapsing from a hotel balcony in San José, Costa Rica whilst on tour.

The point is that “the Engineer” is an all-rounder. As mentioned, he is fortunate to be the football disciple of Fernando Riera, a man who guided Benfica to domestic and European titles, the Chilean national side to its historic third place in the 1962 FIFA World Cup and even coached a select FIFA XI in exhibition matches. Pellegrini was saddened by his death late in 2010 as was the rest of the Chilean and global football community, reflecting on the importance of leaving an “occupational legacy”.

Calm and moderate in his manner and in his speech, he is realistic of why and how South American coaches work with European clubs. Few and far between are the names of those successful, as the civil Engineer can claim his name to it.

The role of a coach is one of a leader, he says. “In my case I have to manage and deal with 25 persons of different ages, idiosyncrasies mentalities and egos. Somebody has to be on top of them. I have watched ballet and opera orchestras where collectively the director must command however the difference is I must select the best eleven leaving substitutes on the bench and reserves on the stands.”

“As a coach I always liked the feeling of playing the game on Sunday. That adrenaline, the constant challenge between winning and losing every week I think is best, at least for my personality,

because I am very competitive. ‘And the worst? There are several things, but for me, when you have lost on Sunday, it's time to wake up on Monday. That sense of defeat, of responsibility. When you generate a lot of adrenaline that is a let-down after that when combined with a defeat and its consequences. I think that's the ugliest feeling in football”, he exclaimed to newspaper La Tercera in an interview.

A man of open ideas but of few convictions, a man committed to two centre-forwards in attack is currently reaping the red-hot form of born-again Argentinian forward Javier Saviola at Málaga.

The two met at Argentine giants River Plate when winning the 2003 Argentine Primera División title. Another of his Málaga pupils is Diego Buonanotte and both are not strange to one another. In fact Pellegrini's successful mix is the blending of South American play and creativity with the European rigidity and discipline, and for him it works.

At Villarreal, Pellegrini opened up opportunities for several talents whilst tagging along experienced names. Santi Cazorla for example was given the go-ahead as was Joan Capdevila and Marcos Senna further cemented his spot in the Spanish national team for Euro 2008. He lured several South Americans like Juan Pablo Sorín, Juan Román Riquelme to Diego Forlán to name a few with notable results, with highs and lows.

Villarreal was unheard of before reaching the semi-finals of the 2006 UEFA Champions League.

Now with over eight years of experience at the top level in Spain, the Chilean is working with

a money-hungry and money-stricken club with an ambitious project. One that he feels very identified to.

Rumoured links to other major European clubs always circulate but he has stated his appreciation towards settling to life in Spain and valuing commitment and respect in football. In fact, he emphasises they are both instrumental to life.

“I went through different emotions coming from Villarreal and then onto Real Madrid. There is a big responsibility here at Málaga and our Champions League dream is not only a reality but a huge motivation for the people of this city.”

He is a man of philosophical intake, where his character stands above emotions. It is necessary in a world of pressure for results in professional football. Within his leadership, he expresses his instructions for his players and over the years they have developed into more specific instructions.

“Passing on knowledge is a gift and giving it to a group is generally poor because it can be generic. Face-to-face communication is where one makes a difference”.

With ten years abroad away from his home country and nostalgia does step in. Being away from family has its price although its fruition arises from key decision-making instances in his life.

He confesses to being both famous and lonely. “There are obviously 24 hours in a day and you must stay occupied. I am obviously very busy as a professional full-time manager and being lonely gives you that time to focus on your professional career which is a facet of life that before



Copa Libertadores action as Uruguay's Penarol (yellow) overcame Emelec of Ecuador 1-0 to go top of Group 4.

I did not have the opportunity to do so”, and that specifically attains not to just football, but his engineering profession, art, reading, listening to music and playing golf.

Today Pellegrini's only realistic goal is to always win the next game. “We must be careful to set goals. I always want to reach the top. But beware, that excessive optimism can generate a major frustration. You have to keep trying from Sunday to Sunday. I live for challenges.”

In fact, the former defender has openly declared his desire to manage the Chilean national team in the not too distant future.

Copa Libertadores wrap: Uruguayans enjoy winning day
Uruguay's two representatives in the Copa Libertadores, Penarol and Nacional, have both moved to the top of their second-round groups.

Penarol went three points clear at the top of Group 4 with a 1-0 win over Ecuador's Emelec, while Nacional had to come from behind twice to claim a 3-2 victory away to Toluca, leap-frogging the Mexican club in the process to lead Group 1.

Penarol overcame Emelec thanks to Juan Manuel Olivera's 68th-minute goal in Montevideo. After a powerful run into the box from one of his team-mates, Penarol's Fabian Estoyanoff collected the loose ball, before smashing it across the face of goal.

Olivera was the fastest to react, poking the ball past Emelec's goalkeeper Esteban Dreer and extending Penarol's winning streak to six games across all

competitions.

Veteran forward Vicente Sanchez was the match-winner for Nacional, scoring both equalising goals as the Uruguayan club recovered two deficits before Ivan Alonso scored the winner in the 57th minute.

Toluca took the lead in the 22nd minute thanks to a crisp Luis Tejada header, with the Panamanian striker finishing from Marvin Cabrera's score.

Nacional equalised two minutes after half-time when a left-wing cross was parried to the feet of Sanchez and the 33-year-old striker smashed the ball into the roof of the net.

In a frantic start to the second half, Toluca were in front again in the 52nd minute when Brazilian winger Lucas Silva slipped the ball to Edgar Benitez in behind Nacional's defence and the Paraguayan substitute finished calmly under on-rushing goalkeeper Jorge Bava.

Benitez's goal was followed three minutes later by Sanchez's second as he reacted quickest to Juan Albin's partially blocked free-kick to score.

Just two minutes later and Nacional scored the decisive goal with Albin teeing up Alonso, who slotted the ball across Toluca goalkeeper Alfredo Talavera and into the far corner from just inside the penalty area.

The win takes Nacional to four points in Group 1, one ahead of Toluca, who slip to second position.

In other results, Paraguayan club Olimpia smashed Universidad de Chile 3-0, while Tijuana defeated Millonarios 1-0 in Colombia.



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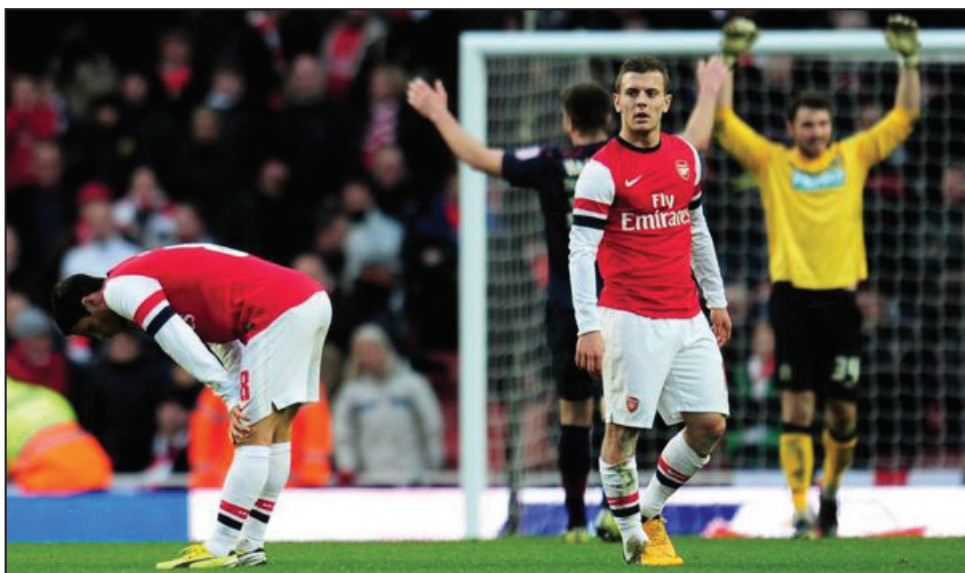


By Samuel Collins

It was unprecedented. No one had ever seen him like this. Infuriated, agitated, brusque. This was Arsène Wenger as we'd never witnessed. Not once during his sixteen years in charge of Arsenal football club was it like this. It all took place on Monday morning during a Champions League press conference ahead of an encounter with Bayern Munich the following day. The most bizarre moment came halfway-through the Frenchman's media briefing; "Why do you look at me?!" the 63-year old asked a journalist. "Because it's your press conference" the dumbfounded reporter replied. "Ok, sorry, I thought it was you who gave this information," the gunners boss replied.

Of course, the "information" Wenger refers to is a story that broke here in England on Sunday night. Tabloid newspaper 'The Sun' wrote an article which suggested Wenger had been offered a two-year contract extension - one that would take him through to 2016. So? What's there to be angry about? "You think I'm stupid?" an irate Wenger continued. He knew the report was released to, in his words, "harm" the club. The last thing a growing proportion of Arsenal fans wanted to learn, after the humiliating 1-0 FA

Arsenal crisis worsens



Goners: FA Cup defeat by Blackburn was followed by a 3-1 UCL home loss to Bayern Munich.

Cup home defeat to Blackburn on the weekend, was that the club's manager would be staying even longer. Fans in North London are becoming tired of the manager's failure to secure a trophy after this, what will be an eighth successive campaign - not all supporters in these parts, though. Cruelly, fans of city rivals Tottenham and Chelsea have chanted "Arsene Wenger, we want you to stay" in recent times. A sign of the decay that is currently tarnishing the Arsenal coach's legacy.

On Tuesday night, it got even worse. Bayern gave Arsenal a hiding. It was an embarrassment. A 3-1 defeat and outplayed on their own pitch, the gunners exited the pitch to a chorus of boos, both at half and full-time. While the German side are "astonishing" - as their coach Jupp Heynckes put it - and sit fifteen points clear

in the Bundesliga, and though the confidence of Arsenal players is understandably low, it shouldn't have been like this. A glance at the two line-ups earlier this week made for interesting reading. Bayern's side cost £97m in transfer fees to assemble, Arsenal's £86m. A difference of just £11m, of course. The annual wage bills? Both £143m. So why such a difference in class? Post-match pundits asked the question; "How many of the current side at the Emirates would get into that Bayern team?" Awkward silences followed as they contemplated each position. Jack Wilshere? Well, possibly, but he'd have to get ahead of Bastian Schweinsteiger and Javi Martinez - two powerhouse midfielders who had just ran the midfield in N5 for 90 minutes. Santi Cazorla? Ahead of Toni Kroos, the supremely

talented 23-year old who is set to dominate Germany's midfield for years to come? Best not to mention the goalkeeper, Wojciech Szczesny, or the defenders in front of him - for it was another nightmare they had endured. It looks increasingly likely with each passing season that defensive coaching at London Colney - Arsenal's excellent state-of-the-art training ground - is being overlooked.

The first-leg strikes from Kroos, Thomas Muller and Mario Mandzukic leave Arsenal battered, bruised and with nowhere to hide. Saturday sees struggling Aston Villa visit the Emirates. What follows is a period which, in all likelihood, will decide Arsenal's, and Wenger's, future. A North London derby at White Hart Lane with neighbours Spurs, comes before a home clash with high-

flying Everton. After which an ill-fated trip to the Allianz Arena looms. That second-leg in Munich is, in many ways, now just an irrelevance - Wenger labelled it "like climbing Mount Everest". It's the crucial league games ahead that will determine whether or not the club will enter a 16th consecutive season in the Champions League. The 15th is already over.

Bayern responded to last summer's European cup final defeat against Chelsea by strengthening the squad with talented performers; Dante (£4m). Mandzukic (£10m), Martinez (£34m). They now have, along with Barcelona and Real Madrid, the finest squad in world football. With reported transfer funds of £70m, Arsenal can certainly match their German counterparts in that department. It's now more clear than ever that the squad Wenger has conjured up isn't good enough to lift silverware. This season has seen the London side break some unwanted records; After 9 years unbeaten at home against foreign sides in Europe, Arsenal have now lost 2 of their last 3 games here against those from abroad. The campaign has also seen the club exit both domestic cup competitions to lower-league opposition for the first time since 1984/85. And they sit 21 points off Manchester United in the league too.

Chariman Peter Hill-Wood and majority shareholder Stan Kroenke remain "supportive" of Wenger, but it feels like his reign is nearing its end.

UEFA Champions League: Galatasaray 1 Schalke 1

A determined Schalke have salvaged a 1-1 draw in their Champions League last-16 first leg away to Galatasaray in Istanbul on Wednesday. Burak Yilmaz had given his side a dream start in the 12th minute with a powerful strike, but the Turkish team were pegged back by Jermaine Jones' equaliser and will have to get a result in the second leg in Germany to stay in the continental competition.

Porto 1 Malaga 0

Porto took the upper hand in their Champions League round-of-16 tie with Malaga after winning the first leg at home 1-0 on Tuesday. Manuel Pellegrini's selection of two strikers lacking mobility in Julio Baptista and Roque Santa Cruz saw the visitors pose very little threat as the hosts dominated possession in the first half at Estadio do Dragao.

However, it was not until the second period that Vitor Pereira's men made their superiority on count, Joao Moutinho slotting home a tidy finish to win it in the 56th minute.

Arsenal 1 Bayern Munich 3

Arsenal's Champions League hopes were left hanging by a thread after they were beaten 3-1 at home by Bayern Munich in the round of 16.

Toni Kroos and Thomas Mueller put Bayern ahead after 20 minutes of the first leg at the Emirates Stadium but Lukas Podolski gave the hosts hope when he pulled one back in the 55th minute of Tuesday's match.

Just when Arsenal were starting to gain a foothold in the match, Mario Mandzukic looped the ball over the line with 13 minutes left to restore Bayern's two-goal advantage.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger had recalled his big guns as he made seven changes from the team that were dumped out of the FA Cup by Blackburn Rovers on Saturday, with Theo Walcott spearheading the attack in place of the dropped Olivier Giroud.



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EPL
Wrap

By Andrew Bishara

Arsenal needs change

After the 1-0 loss to Blackburn Rovers, the vocal crowd at the Emirates Stadium, rang out with a chorus of boos and abuse. They had reasons to be furious. This was their club's best chance of really challenging for a trophy. And once again, for the ninth consecutive season, Arsenal could finish trophyless.

There is of course, still the matter of UEFA Champions League, but if Arsenal could not beat a lower league side in Blackburn, how will they fare against the German heavyweights of Bayern Munich; an unstoppable force this season?

Post-Match, Arsene Wenger said his side needed to show character in the game against the German giants.

"It's important we focus on our next game," Wenger said. "It's a good opportunity to show we have character and that we are men who can fight for each other in our next game. That's all we can do"

But isn't this the problem with Arsenal? Every time they suffer a shock defeat, they pull some magical moment and record a massive victory. It seems the same every time. The FA Cup was going to be Wenger's moment in the sun. It had to be.

They might fail to qualify for Europe, for the first time in 15 years. It will be considered a massive



Bradford will aim to upstage Swansea in this weekend's Capital Cup Final

blow to the London club. Over the years, their reputation has suffered, and regardless of what you think of them, they aren't a "big club" anymore. They used to be up with Manchester United, AC Milan, and Barcelona. Nowadays, they are on par with Everton, Tottenham and Liverpool (and that's no disrespect to those clubs, who've done tremendous jobs in catching up to the big boys)

If Arsenal did win the FA Cup, and finish outside the Top four, Wenger would see it as justification for his methods. Same too, if they pulled a "Chelsea" and won the Champions League or if they made it in the Top Four again.

But if they fail in making the top four, maybe that it provide the club with a rethink. Maybe, it finally highlights that Wenger can't change the rot that he has set in the club; maybe, Wenger's time is up.

If Arsenal were to drop that low, to finally "hit rock bottom", it can be seen as a sign that the only way to go would be up. That change is imminent and will most likely provide a base for success. Whether that means Wenger goes or not,

it besides the question; it could mean a clearance of players (Abou Diaby, Aaron Ramsey, Gervinho to name a few) that Wenger suggests a "top quality" but very, very, clearly aren't.

It could finally mean a change of transfer policy. Maybe the club realises that they might finally have to spend if they want to be considered a big club anymore. Perhaps a change of tactics. Maybe switch from a 4-3-3 to a 4-4-2, like Wenger did in the old days? Like Manchester United play like now, and to such great success. Or maybe, focus clearly on defence, and forget about the smashing teams for six, but rather just for one and holding out.

There has been a lot of fury and speculation regarding Wenger's future at the Gunners. However, this season could be one, that maybe will finally spark some change at this once great club.

Capital One Cup Final Preview
And the Premier League's back for this weekend, after the FA Cup last week. However, I've decided to ignore the round of

ENGLAND EPL



Last5games
Most recent first

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	
1 Manchester United	26	21	2	3	62	31	+31	65	W W W D W
2 Manchester City	26	15	8	3	48	24	+24	53	L D D W W
3 Chelsea	26	14	7	5	55	28	+27	49	W L D W D
4 Tottenham Hotspur	26	14	6	6	44	30	+14	48	W W D D D
5 Arsenal	26	12	8	6	50	29	+21	44	W W D W L
6 Everton	26	10	12	4	40	32	+8	42	L D W D D
7 Liverpool	27	10	9	8	49	34	+15	39	W L D D W
8 Swansea City	27	9	10	8	38	34	+4	37	L W L W D
9 West Bromwich ...	26	11	4	11	36	35	+1	37	W L D L L
10 Stoke City	26	7	12	7	26	31	-5	33	W L D L L
11 West Ham United	26	8	6	12	29	38	-9	30	L W L D L
12 Fulham	26	7	8	11	36	42	-6	29	D L W L D
13 Sunderland	26	7	8	11	28	34	-6	29	L D W W W
14 Norwich City	26	6	11	9	25	40	-15	29	D D D D L
15 Southampton	26	6	9	11	36	45	-9	27	W D L D D
16 Newcastle United	26	7	6	13	34	46	-12	27	L W L W D
17 Aston Villa	26	5	9	12	25	50	-25	24	W D L D L
18 Reading	26	5	8	13	33	48	-15	23	L W D W W
19 Wigan Athletic	26	5	6	15	30	51	-21	21	L D D L D
20 Queens Park Ra...	26	2	11	13	19	41	-22	17	L D D D D

Premier League matches and instead preview the first domestic trophy available. That's right, it's the Capitol One Cup Final, the trophy that according to everyone, no club wants to win, but every club takes it seriously anyway.

Now, what makes me say this? This is the first year since 2005 that one of the big boys isn't in the final. And well, is rather saying something, because if the biggest clubs want to the win the trophy, it must hold some value, doesn't it? For those to mock the League Cup, it is a fact, a decent trophy to collect.

Since 2005, Manchester United have won the trophy three times; Chelsea twice, Liverpool and Tottenham, one apiece, with Birmingham the only outsider, and that came against the expense of Arsenal.

So what is the appeal? Well, it only takes a few short rounds to make it to the final. There are no replays like the FA Cup, and the final is held months before the end of the season, so teams aren't tired or burnt out. It appeals to clubs, because it's a trophy that can be

collected without the long haul.

Which is exactly, what will happen to Swansea and Bradford. Mind you, they didn't have the easiest ways there. Bradford pulled off the most stunning of shocks, defeating Arsenal, then brushed aside Aston Villa in the semi-finals.

For Swansea, they had to overcome Liverpool and then Chelsea, in a two-legged tie that they completely dominate, before making the final.

Michael Laudrup's Swansea are the favourites for the cup going in and it's hard to see why not. They have pulled off one of the coups of the season in bringing in Michu (who already has 18 goals this season) and have comfortably steadied themselves in the Premier League. They don't have the pressures of trying to avoid relegation; in fact, they're closer to the European spots, then the bottom.

As such, Laudrup admitted to resting key players in the team's 5-0 thrashing by Liverpool ahead of the final.

He told BBC SPORT: "Michu and Ashley Williams were left out ahead of the final but that's only a part of it, there were a lot of good

players out there"

With the players focused on the claiming the club's first ever, major trophy the result really comes as no surprise to many, but Laudrup said that he didn't want his team going into the final, on the back of such a performance.

"You can't play like that. We just have to go, it wasn't what we wanted in the build-up to the final but we have to get back on the horse."

As for Bradford, they've sitting in tenth position in League Two (England's fourth division) and look like avoiding relegation this season, but might find it hard to gain promotion.

However, that wouldn't be their biggest concern. They could become the first lower league team to win the trophy since Sheffield Wednesday in 1991. Manager Phil Parkinson should be proud of his team's efforts this season, regardless of the outcome of the final. It would be fitting end though to this season's Cinderella story.

Andrew Bishara runs the popular football website <http://thetrequartista.com>

Clarke And West Brom Can Finally Start Looking Up

London Eye



By Robert Davis

No team has been relegated from the Premier League more times since the turn of the millennium than West Bromwich Albion. Three times have their fans suffered relegation from the top tier, four times they have bounced back up from the Championship.

It's starting to look like fourth time lucky this time round for the Baggies.

Albion currently sit comfortably in ninth position with a game in hand over Swansea City and Liverpool above them, yet if not for a small dip in form since the beginning of 2013, they would certainly still be occupying one of the European spots on offer in the league.

The summer of 2012 was full of apprehension though for fans at the Hawthorns, with European football being the last thing on their minds since the man who had steadied the ship, Roy Hodgson, had left for the England national job.

Steve Clark arrived to a mixed reception after spending almost 15 years as a number two at clubs such as Newcas-



Baggies boss Steve Clark has his troops playing with a European spot in sight and hopes to bring the glory days back to the Hawthorns, not seen since the days of Cyrille Regis and co.

tle United, Chelsea and most recently Liverpool, taking his first permanent managerial post for the midlands side. His only previous managerial experience came in 1999 after being placed in charge on a caretaker basis after Ruud Gullit's resignation at Newcastle. The result? A 5-1 loss to Manchester United. A win percentage of zero percent.

West Brom fans certainly had a right to feel worried about the risky appointment, even if his ability as an assistant manager has never come into ques-

tion. Did he have enough to be a manager, or did his capabilities lie simply in coaching?

Not only has Clarke answered those questions, he's proved to many that he has what it takes to not only take full control of a side, but do so with positive outcomes, as well as building on the stability that Hodgson had introduced previously.

That stability was somewhat questioned though after recent, rather humorous events involving Nigeria international Peter Odemwingie and his deadline day antics.

The 31-year-old had been vy-

ing for a transfer away from the Hawthorns throughout the January window and with the market coming to a close, took it in his own hands to try and force a move to Queens Park Rangers by driving to the ground himself before being turned away.

Clarke's ability as a manger was tested after much media coverage over the incident saw him come under serious scrutiny for the first time. His demeanour during press conferences after though showed calmness under pressure, usually shown by those with years

of managerial experience. He dealt with the striker internally and the ordeal is now seen as a mere joke that will go down in footballing folklore rather than a serious incident that could have been detrimental to Clarke's position in charge.

It is clear in his first full season in charge at Albion that Clarke doesn't mind taking risks. Having come away with one point in just four matches this season, only Manchester United have drawn less this term. And we all know that Sir Alex Ferguson is one of, if not the greatest risk taker in recent managerial history.

Going out to win a match, not accepting a point and putting faith into a squad to get a positive result will endear managers to those watching in the stands. To put faith in a squad though, you must first have the quality in depth to delve into, something that Clarke has.

The loan signing of Romelu Lukaku thanks to his Chelsea connections has been pivotal in implementing an attacking, forward thinking ethos into his side. The all round mentality of the 19-year-old allows him to control the front-line, introducing teammates into play as well as being able to run with the ball and unleash a shot from anywhere in, or outside the box.

The Belgian looks set to be a superstar for the future, with many feeling he is already

primed to step up as the front-man for the Champions League winners. For the remainder of the season though, he'll continue to menace defences in an Albion shirt, looking to add to the ten goals he has already scored. If Lukaku's recent comments are anything to go by, another season on loan with the Baggies could suit all parties, none more so than West Brom.

The signing of Claudio Yacob on a free from Argentinian side Racing Club de Avellaneda has also proved to be a shrewd signing for Clarke and his side. The defensive midfielder has impressed with his consistency in his first season in the Premier League, providing cover for the back four alongside Youssouf Mulumbu that has helped keep their goal difference in the pluses.

West Brom fans certainly won't be counting their chickens yet after many failed attempts at becoming an established Premier League club under Bryan Robson and Tony Mowbray in previous seasons.

It may be a few more years before the chants of 'boing boing' are but a distant memory at the Hawthorns. For now though, Clarke and his West Brom side can enjoy the kind of stability that might just see the Baggies keep their status as a Premier League side for a few more seasons at least.



Wrap Italia

By Luca Cetta

Juve slip, Napoli fail to capitalise

Juventus lost in Rome, but Napoli could only manage a draw against Sampdoria. Inter were knocked black and blue by Fiorentina, while a quartet of clubs aided their survival chances.

2013 had started in the worst possible fashion for Roma. They thumped Milan to go into the winter break with momentum, but that completely dissipated during a run of six winless matches. The latest of that streak came at Sampdoria and represented the first match in charge for Aurelio Andreazzoli, replacing the sacked Zdenek Zeman. Juventus completed back-to-back wins for the first time since Christmas as they disposed of Fiorentina. The Bianconeri subsequently took Celtic Park by storm, taking command of their Champions League Round of 16 tie with a 3-0 first leg win over Scottish champions Celtic. Goalscorers that evening, Alessandro Matri and Mirko Vucinic were confirmed starters, but Claudio Marchisio was suspended. Meanwhile, Andreazzoli had Francesco Totti and Erik Lamela supporting central striker Pablo Osvaldo, but key defender Leandro Castan was sidelined through injury.

Roma fans had stormed the Trigo-



Francesco Totti celebrates scoring against Juventus with Roma team-mate Miralem Pjanic.

ria training base during the week with banners and chants against Osvaldo, plus directors Walter Sabatini and Franco Baldini. That was put to one side as the Curva Sud was in a boisterous state. The players responded. The Giallorossi took command early against a fatigued Juve, although Andrea Pirlo forced a smart save out of Maarten Stekelenburg from a free kick.

Juve lost the midfield as they lost their legs. The Lupi made their dominance count just shy of the hour mark. A free kick was only half cleared to the edge of the penalty area, where Totti unleashed a rocket that gave Gianluigi Buffon absolutely no chance. The shot was clocked at 113km/h. It proved the deciding moment, as Juve produced a lacklustre performance that had no answer for Roma's fire and determination.

Bianconeri defender Martin Caceres said they had 'no excuses' for the showing, while Andreazzoli praised the players for rising to the

occasion after a poor run of results. "The credit always goes to the players. As a group and a club we stayed close to the players and tried to reassure them in every way we could, telling them how important they can be in a game situation."

The result gave Napoli a chance to close the gap to just two points. They faced a Sampdoria side which had taken points from Juve, Milan and Roma since Delio Rossi took over. He was suspended for two matches following the altercation at the conclusion of the Roma match seven days earlier, but the visitors did not miss a beat.

Edinson Cavani spurned two early opportunities, but after that Samp took control. Napoli were hit 3-0 in the Europa League midweek and looked short of ideas here, but Samp failed to take their chances. A gripping second half saw Napoli hit the post, but Sampdoria were resolute. An entertaining contest finished 0-0. Napoli closed the gap, but not as much as hoped. There

ITALY Serie A												
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5Games Most recent first			
1 Juventus	25	17	4	4	50	17	+33	55	LWWDW			
2 Napoli	25	15	6	4	46	21	+25	51	DDWWD			
3 Lazio	25	13	5	7	35	29	+6	44	LDLLD			
4 Milan	25	13	5	7	44	31	+13	44	WDWWW			
5 Inter	25	13	4	8	40	33	+7	43	LWLDD			
6 Fiorentina	25	12	6	7	45	30	+15	42	WLWLD			
7 Catania	25	11	6	8	32	30	+2	39	WDLWW			
8 Roma	25	11	4	10	51	45	+6	37	WLLDD			
9 Udinese	25	9	9	7	35	34	+1	36	LWLWL			
10 Parma	25	8	8	9	31	33	-2	32	LDLLD			
11 Torino	25	7	11	7	29	28	+1	31	WLDDW			
12 Sampdoria	25	8	6	11	31	30	+1	29	DWDWL			
13 Chievo	25	8	5	12	26	40	-14	29	DLLWD			
14 Cagliari	25	7	7	11	28	41	-13	28	WDWDD			
15 Atalanta	25	8	5	12	22	35	-13	27	LDWLD			
16 Bologna	25	7	5	13	33	35	-2	26	LDWDL			
17 Genoa	25	6	7	12	26	37	-11	25	WDWDL			
18 Siena	25	7	6	12	27	34	-7	21	WDWLW			
19 Pescara	25	6	3	16	20	51	-31	21	LDLLL			
20 Palermo	25	3	10	12	22	39	-17	19	DDLLD			

was an unsavoury incident post-match, with Marek Hamsik robbed at gunpoint by armed men when driving home. It was not the first time the Slovak experienced such an ordeal in Naples.

Like Roma, Fiorentina had experienced a downturn in form since the New Year. They had slipped out of the European places, but responded emphatically by mauling Inter 4-1. Adem Ljajic and Stevan Jovetic each netted a brace as the Viola showed contempt for their illustrious opponent. Antonio Cassano scored a consolation for the Nerazzurri.

Mario Balotelli was again the star for Milan, scoring the winner against Parma. Gabriel Paletta diverted into his own net to give the Rossoneri the lead. Super Mario doubled the advantage when he curled in a free kick after the break, before Nicola Sansone grabbed an injury time consolation. It finished 2-1.

Elsewhere, Siena stunned high-flying Lazio with a 3-0 victory, as Torino triumphed 2-1 versus Ata-

lanta, under the watchful gaze of Italy boss Cesare Prandelli. He was there to observe Alessio Cerci, who responded by opening the scoring. Cagliari won the relegation battle at Pescara 2-0, with Marco Sau netting twice. Genoa are unbeaten in four matches under new boss Davide Ballardini after beating Udinese, while Catania edged past Bologna. Finally, Chievo and Palermo drew 1-1.

Looking ahead: Derby time in Milan

The Derby della Madonnina takes centre stage this weekend. Incredibly, Milan lead their cross-town rivals by a point, something unthinkable a few months ago.

The two are eyeing the final Champions League place on offer, meanwhile the Rossoneri have revenge on their mind following their controversial loss in the first Derby. Inter were hit in the Europa League by Diego Milito's season-ending injury and will be relying on Cassano

and Rodrigo Palacio to step up in his absence.

Napoli travel to Udinese, who are undefeated in 11 home matches. One week out from their showdown with Juventus, Walter Mazzarri's side need to keep up the pressure. Juventus face relegation threatened Siena, with Marchisio and Federico Peluso available for selection once more.

After fantastic wins, both Roma and Fiorentina are on the road at lower half opposition. Atalanta host Andreazzoli's side, while the Viola make the short journey to Bologna. While the two visitors chase Europe, their adversaries are looking to steer clear of the relegation zone.

Elsewhere, in-form Cagliari host Torino, as Lazio look to recover third place – after slipping behind Milan on goal difference – when they entertain Pescara. Palermo and Genoa meet in a crucial relegation clash, while Parma host Catania. Finally, Sampdoria are at home against Chievo.



Viva Espana

By Pepe Lopez

Spanish Armada Sinking In European Conquest

Despite the Spanish La Liga starting the knock-out stages of the UEFA Champions League with dominant 4 teams and the UEFA Europa League with 2 teams, only 1 Spanish club in each competition genuinely look like advancing to the next stage in each respective competition. In the Champions League Barcelona remain competition favourites ahead of their clash against Italy's AC Milan and in the Europa League Levante carry a 3-0 lead into their 2nd leg against Greece's Olympiacos.

Conversely, UEFA Europa League holders Atletico Madrid suffered a shock 2-0 loss at home to the Tartarstan Republic's Rubin Kazan despite Atletico having a 1 man advantage for the whole 2nd half, after Rubin Captain Roman Sharanov received a 2nd yellow card at the end of the 1st half. Atletico wasted many chances to equalise in the 2nd half, including a Radamel Falcao shot which rattled the Rubin Kazan cross bar. However, with 5 minutes



Barcelona came undone against Milan 2-0 in a blockbuster UCL 1st Leg tie.

of injury time played, Atletico's long time reserve goalkeeper Asenjo did little to show he deserves more game time, going up for a corner kick, only to be caught out on the counter attack and give up an easy open goal to the visitors from the Tartarstan Republic. Atletico Madrid will practically have to travel to Asia for the return leg, the Republic of Tartarstan lies deep inside Russia's borders, in total a 7 hour flight if flying via private charter plane. Otherwise Atletico will have to fly some 5 hours to Moscow, and then wait for a connecting 2 hour flight from Moscow to Kazan.

In the Champions League Malaga became the 3rd Spanish club to record a disappointing 1st leg result, with Valencia losing 2-1 at home to Paris St Germain and Real Madrid drawing 1-1 at home to Manchester

United. Malaga lost 1-0 away to Porto in Portugal. Despite the loss Malaga's Coach Manuel Pellegrini still has some hope in advancing to the quarter-finals; "Porto didn't really hurt us and the goal was offside. I thought from the beginning that Moutinho was offside."

"We were not a good Malaga because Porto pressed us well. We didn't create much space. Playing a game this badly, we didn't create many chances. I hope that, at home, we can reverse the situation. We can turn the scoreboard at home if we can play as we do normally. We played badly going forward."

Meanwhile in England, Manuel Pellegrini has attracted the attention of big spending Chelsea FC and Manchester City. Malaga FC have been banned from next sea-

SPAIN La Liga												
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5Games Most recent first			
1 Barcelona	24	21	2	1	80	27	+53	65	WWDWL			
2 Atlético Madrid	24	17	2	5	47	23	+24	53	WLWLW			
3 Real Madrid	24	15	4	5	60	22	+38	49	WWLWW			
4 Málaga	24	12	6	6	37	21	+16	42	WWDWD			
5 Valencia	24	12	4	8	34	35	-1	40	WWDWL			
6 Real Sociedad	24	10	7	7	38	30	+8	37	DWWDW			
7 Rayo Vallecano	24	12	1	11	33	41	-8	37	LWLWL			
8 Real Betis	24	11	3	10	31	35	-4	36	LDLLD			
9 Levante	24	10	4	10	30	36	-6	34	DLLWL			
10 Sevilla	24	9	5	10	33	35	-2	32	WLWWD			
11 Getafe	24	9	5	10	32	43	-11	32	WLWLD			
12 Espanyol	24	8	7	9	31	34	-3	31	WWWDD			
13 Real Valladolid	24	8	6	10	32	32	+0	30	LDLLW			
14 Athletic Club	24	7	5	12	29	47	-18	26	LLDWD			
15 Granada	24	7	5	12	23	34	-11	26	LWLWLW			
16 Osasuna	24	6	7	11	20	27	-7	25	WDWLW			
17 Real Zaragoza	24	7	3	14	23	34	-11	24	LLDDL			
18 Celta de Vigo	24	5	5	14	22	31	-9	20	LLDLD			
19 Mallorca	24	4	6	14	23	45	-22	18	LDLLL			
20 Deportivo La C...	24	3	7	14	28	54	-26	16	LLLLL			

son's European competitions due to financial irregularities by UEFA. With this harsh penalty, Malaga FC now looks set to lose its coach and young Spanish star Isco, having already lost Santi Cazorla and Nacho Monreal to Arsenal FC this season. Malaga CEO had this to say on the UEFA ban; "We are disappointed by a decision that I consider to be unjust and which I feel to be mistaken. But worried, no, because we are calm and confident about our compliance."

Champions League: Milan 2 Barcelona 0
AC Milan upset Barcelona 2-0 in the opening leg of their Champions League round-of-16 clash at San Siro on Wednesday.

Kevin-Prince Boateng opened the scoring in controversial circum-

stances on 57 minutes after an apparent handball by Cristian Zapata in the build-up, and Sulley Muntari finished off a counterattack for the second goal with nine minutes to go.

Much like last season's 0-0 quarter-final first-leg meeting between the two sides, Barca controlled possession, but they were unable to convert their dominance into goals in the face of a strong defensive effort from Milan.

In the absence of the cup-tied striker Mario Balotelli, Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri called on Giampaolo Pazzini to partner Stephan El Shaarawy up front, while Xavi Hernandez passed a late fitness test to start in midfield for the visitors.

Just before the hour mark Milan took the lead out of nowhere.

Kevin Constant laid off a free-kick to Riccardo Montolivo, whose shot appeared to cannon off the hand of Zapata.

There was no intervention from the referee and Barca were stunned as Boateng steadied himself to finish from the edge of the box.

With 81 minutes on the clock, Milan's optimism turned to jubilation, when a sweeping move on the break saw M'Baye Niang release El Shaarawy into the area, who in turn teed up Muntari for a precise finish from inside the box.

The San Siro was rocking with pride and disbelief, and Barca could not find a way back into the match in the time remaining, setting up an enticing second leg at Camp Nou on March 12.

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CROATIA 1.HNL																
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games		Most recent first					
1 Dinamo Zagreb	20	14	2	4	44	17	+27	44	W	L	W	L	W			
2 Hajduk Split	20	10	6	4	29	14	+15	36	W	W	D	D	D			
3 Split	20	10	3	7	31	24	+7	33	W	L	W	W	L			
4 Lokomotiva	20	9	6	5	29	23	+6	33	D	W	L	W	D			
5 Rijeka	20	9	5	6	29	27	+2	32	L	D	W	W	W			
6 Slaven Koprivnica	20	9	4	7	28	28	+0	31	L	D	W	L	W			
7 Osijek	20	6	8	6	21	20	+1	26	L	W	L	D	L			
8 Istra 1961	20	5	6	9	19	24	-5	21	D	L	D	L	L			
9 Zadar	20	5	5	10	21	36	-15	20	W	W	D	W	L			
10 Inter Zaprešić	20	4	7	9	21	26	-5	19	L	L	L	L	W			
11 Cibalia	20	5	4	11	18	31	-13	19	W	L	D	L	W			
12 Zagreb	20	4	4	12	14	34	-20	16	L	W	D	W	L			

GERMANY Bundesliga																
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games		Most recent first					
1 Bayern München	22	18	3	1	57	7	+50	57	W	W	W	W	W			
2 Borussia Dortmund	22	12	6	4	50	26	+24	42	W	L	W	W	W			
3 Bayer Leverkusen	22	12	5	5	43	30	+13	41	W	D	L	D	W			
4 Eintracht Fran...	22	11	4	7	38	34	+4	37	L	D	W	W	L			
5 Freiburg	22	9	7	6	29	22	+7	34	W	W	L	D	D			
6 Hamburger SV	22	10	4	8	27	27	+0	34	W	W	L	W	D			
7 Mainz 05	22	9	5	8	30	27	+3	32	D	D	L	W	D			
8 Hannover 96	22	8	3	10	41	41	+0	30	D	W	L	W	L			
9 Schalke 04	22	8	6	8	35	37	-2	30	D	L	L	D	W			
10 Borussia M'gla...	22	7	9	6	31	33	-2	30	L	D	L	W	D			
11 Werder Bremen	22	8	4	10	38	41	-3	28	L	W	W	L	L			
12 Stuttgart	22	8	4	10	24	39	-15	28	W	L	L	L	L			
13 Fortuna Düsseldorf	22	7	6	9	27	29	-2	27	W	L	W	L	L			
14 Nürnberg	22	6	8	8	22	29	-7	26	D	W	L	D	L			
15 Wolfsburg	22	7	5	10	22	32	-10	26	L	W	D	L	W			
16 Hoffenheim	22	4	4	14	26	46	-20	16	L	W	L	D	L			
17 Augsburg	22	2	9	11	18	35	-17	15	L	D	D	D	W			
18 Greuther Fürth	22	2	6	14	13	36	-23	12	L	L	W	L	L			

THE CHAMPIONSHIP																
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games		Most recent first					
1 Cardiff City	32	21	4	7	53	33	+20	67	L	W	D	W	W			
2 Hull City	33	19	5	9	45	33	+12	62	W	W	W	L	W			
3 Watford	33	18	5	10	66	42	+24	59	W	W	D	W	L			
4 Crystal Palace	33	16	10	7	60	41	+19	58	W	W	D	W	L			
5 Leicester City	31	16	5	10	53	28	+25	53	L	L	W	W	W			
6 Middlesbrough	33	16	3	14	51	50	+1	51	L	D	L	W	L			
7 Brighton & Hov...	32	12	13	7	45	34	+11	49	W	D	W	L	D			
8 Nottingham Forest	33	11	12	10	47	46	+1	45	W	D	L	L	L			
9 Leeds United	32	13	6	13	43	48	-5	45	W	L	D	L	W			
10 Derby County	33	11	11	11	49	46	+3	44	D	D	L	D	W			
11 Blackburn Rovers	32	11	11	10	42	40	+2	44	L	D	W	W	D			
12 Burnley	32	12	8	12	47	46	+1	44	D	L	D	W	D			
13 Charlton Athletic	33	11	10	12	43	45	-2	43	W	L	D	L	L			
14 Millwall	32	11	8	13	42	48	-6	41	L	L	L	L	L			
15 Blackpool	33	10	10	13	50	49	+1	40	L	L	W	L	W			
16 Bolton Wanderers	32	9	12	11	45	46	-1	39	D	D	W	L	D			
17 Birmingham City	33	9	12	12	41	52	-11	39	D	L	D	W	W			
18 Ipswich Town	33	10	8	15	34	54	-20	38	L	W	L	W	L			
19 Sheffield Wedn...	32	10	7	15	38	47	-9	37	D	D	W	W	D			
20 Barnsley	32	10	7	15	38	48	-10	37	W	W	W	W	D			
21 Huddersfield Town	32	9	10	13	34	57	-23	37	L	D	L	W	L			
22 Wolverhampton ...	33	9	8	16	38	47	-9	35	L	D	D	L	L			
23 Peterborough U...	31	10	3	18	48	56	-8	33	W	W	D	D	L			
24 Bristol City	33	9	4	20	46	62	-16	31	L	L	W	L	W			

Greece Super League																
	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games		Most recent first					
1 Olympiakos Piraeus	22	18	3	1	47	13	+34	57	W	W	L	W	W			
2 Asteras Tripolis	22	12	5	5	31	15	+16	41	W	L	D	W	W			
3 PAOK	22	11	7	4	30	15	+15	40	D	W	D	L	L			
4 Atromitos	22	9	10	3	22	16	+6	37	D	D	W	L	W			
5 PAS Giannina	22	8	7	7	20	18	+2	31	D	W	D	W	L			
6 Levadiakos	22	8	5	9	17	21	-4	29	D	L	D	L	W			
7 Xanthi	22	7	7	8	18	19	-1	28	L	W	W	W	D			
8 OFI	22	7	5	10	25	30	-5	26	L	L	W	L	W			
9 Panthrakikos	22	7	5	10	22	25	-3	26	D	W	L	D	L			
10 Panathinaikos	22	6	10	6	22	23	-1	26	L	D	L	W	D			
11 AEK Athens	22	7	5	10	18	22	-4	26	D	W	W	W	D			
12 Panionios	22	8	1	13	23	30	-7	25	L	L	L	W	L			
13 Plataniás	22	6	6	10	20	27	-7	24	W	W	L	L	L			
14 Aris	22	4	10	8	20	32	-12	22	W	L	D	D	D			
15 Veria	22	4	8	10	15	27	-12	20	L	D	W	L	L			
16 Kerkyra	22	3	8	11	11	28	-17	17	W	L	L	D	D			

TURKEY

Süper Lig



	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games	Most recent first
1 Galatasaray	22	12	7	3	42	25	+17	43	WWDWL	
2 Fenerbahçe	22	10	7	5	34	24	+10	37	WWLWD	
3 Beşiktaş	22	9	9	4	47	33	+14	36	DWDL D	
4 Bursaspor	22	8	10	4	34	26	+8	34	WWDLW	
5 Antalyaspor	22	10	4	8	32	31	+1	34	DWL L L	
6 Kasımpaşa	22	9	6	7	31	23	+8	33	WLDWW	
7 Eskişehirspor	22	8	8	6	36	27	+9	32	LWDWD	
8 Gençlerbirliği	22	7	9	6	35	34	+1	30	WWLWW	
9 Kayserispor	22	8	5	9	30	32	-2	29	WDWW L	
10 Sivasspor	22	8	5	9	25	29	-4	29	LWW L D	
11 Karabükspor	22	8	5	9	28	35	-7	29	D L D L W	
12 Trabzonspor	22	7	6	9	25	27	-2	27	L L W L L	
13 Orduspor	22	5	11	6	24	24	+0	26	D W D L D	
14 İstanbul BB	22	7	5	10	27	28	-1	26	D L L W D	
15 Gaziantepspor	22	6	7	9	21	32	-11	25	D W L L D	
16 Elazığspor	22	4	9	9	17	34	-17	21	L L D W D	
17 Mersin İdmanyurdu	22	4	8	10	23	32	-9	20	L D L W D	
18 Akhisar Beledi...	22	4	7	11	17	32	-15	19	L W L L D	

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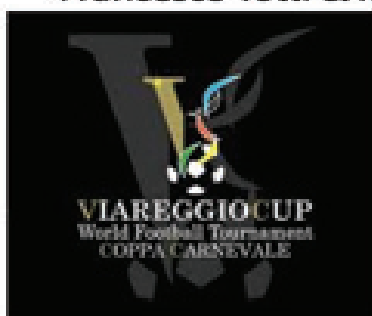


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